

T H E
Spirit of the Martyrs
Revived in the
DOCTRINES
Of the Reverend
Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD,
A N D
The Judicious, and Faithful
METHODISTS.

With Nine most Excellent, and Infallible
SIGNS of the True MINISTERS of
JESUS CHRIST; Necessary to be
known at this Day, wherein so many False
Teachers abound.

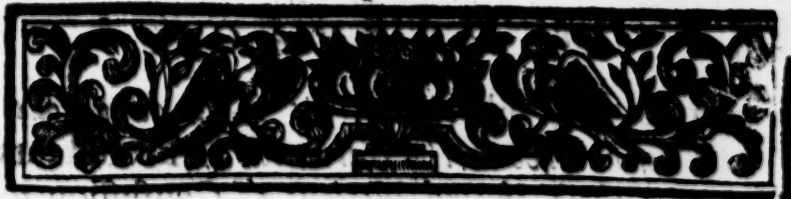
To which are Added,
Some THOUGHTS on PLURALITIES,
and NON-RESIDENCE.

P A R T I.

*--- Neither did my Shepherds search for my
Flock; but the Shepherds fed themselves, and
not my Flock. Ezek. xxxiv. 8.
For all seek their own, not the Things which
are Jesus Christ's. Phil. ii. 21.*

L O N D O N,
Printed, and Sold by T. COOPER, at the
Globe in Pater-noster-Row. 1740. Price 1s.





T O T H E
R E A D E R

Candid READER,



I has been the Lot of all the faithful Followers of our Dear Lord Jesus Christ, to be hated, and reviled for Preaching his holy Gospel; and maintaining, and defending his precious Truths: And sure I am, that pious Soul, the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, was not one of the least Instances of it. How did those he called his Brethren, the Clergy, endeavour all in their Power, to hinder his Usefulness in this Nation; and poured all the Contempt they could on him for his pious Zeal shewn to many Thousands of poor ignorant Creatures, that knew nothing of that important Work of Regeneration; but falsely imagined, that by the Ceremony at the Font, Infants were made Members of Christ, Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven: A No-

tion as fully ridiculous, as it is dangerous ; and destructive to the Salvation of Protestants, as are those absurd Notions of Confession to, and Absolution from a Priest, among the Romanists. But Mr. Whitefield told them truly, that If they were not regenerated by the Spirit of Christ in their Souls, and so made New Creatures, they were but baptized Heathens ; and so living and dying could not go to Heaven. He further told them, If they could be carry'd up into that blessed Place in an unregenerate State, it would be an Hell to them ; their Souls not being made holy here, they could not endure the Holiness there.

This was faithful Dealing : This was undeceiving those that had been deceiv'd all their Days ; and this seems to be one of the Chief Reasons for the Clergy's Carriage to, and Hatred of him.

One Thing very shocking to him was, That some of those who are stiled, and esteemed the spiritual Fathers of the Church ; and from whom the Clergy receive their Authority to preach the Gospel, should yet have been found amongst the Number of them who would have hinder'd him from Preaching it ; when he had receiv'd Authority so to do. This Kind of Conduct, which could not but appear odious in the Eyes of judicious, and godly People, must likewise be very offensive to the Majesty of Heaven, to whom all Things are known, and who judges not with Man's Judgment.

Be-

The P R E F A C E. ii.

Before he first went to Georgia, he was often invited to preach Charity Sermons; the Reason of which is clear, because the Collections were larger than usual. But at his Return, being convinc'd in his own Mind of the great Defection of many of the Clergy from some of the Fundamental Doctrines of the Reformation; the holy Zeal in his Breast, and Integrity in his Heart would not suffer him to hold his Peace: Which having declar'd wherever he preach'd, the Alarm went thorow the Nation, and gave great Offence to those whom he calls his indolent, earthly-minded, and pleasure-taking Brethren; and for a Proof of the Truth of it, he referr'd to the Articles, Homilies, and Collects of the Church of England, which stand as a Wall of Brass against them.

*This may, very probably, be another Reason of their unjust Hatred, and most implacable Malice to him, and his Fellow-Labourers; and what seems the rather to confirm this Opinion, is, the Conduct of some towards that meek, and laborious Servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Howel Harris: This gave him a true Sight of their persecuting Temper, and could not but convince him what he must expect, should he by any Means fall under Ecclesiastical, or Civil Judgments. But blessed be GOD, who gave him Wisdom, and Conduct to behave so circumspectly as to escape their Hands; and tho' departed from us for a Season, yet I hope, thro' the great Goodness, and Mercy of God, he will be return'd again in the Fulness of the Blessings
of*

of the Gospel of Christ, for the Comfort of Thousands of Souls.

Should any One have made a Discovery to the Heads of a Nation, or State, that there was a Design carrying on by evil-minded Persons to subvert it; and this should be made so apparent to them, that there was no Reason to doubt the Truth of it; what Honours, or Favours would they not confer upon such an One; but when Mr. Whitefield had discover'd, that some of the Clergy held such Doctrines, as were as destructive to the good, old, orthodox Doctrines of the Church of England, as an Invasion would be to a Nation, or State; when he, I say, had taken off their Vizard, or Mask, they had worn for many Years; so that any impartial Person might clearly discern the Truth of what he said of them; then instead of Thanks for his Faithfulness and Courage, they, in Return, gave him all the vile Reproaches their Heads could invent, or their Tongues express, to lessen his Reputation among the honest, and well-meaning People, to keep them from bearing him, and thereby hold them the closer, and surer to themselves, and their lethargick Doctrines: A Contrivance as absurd, and destructive to the People, as political in them; let their Pretences be ever so plausible to the contrary. For,

First, Should the Clergy pretend, they were ignorant of these Doctrines contained in the Articles, Homilies, and Collects of the Church of England, maintain'd, and supported by the pure Word of God; which Mr. Whitefield charges

The P R E F A C E.

v

charges them with departing from, and subverting; then this Consequence must unavoidably follow, that the Right Reverend Bishops gave them Imposition of Hands, and sent them forth to preach Doctrines they were ignorant of; and contrary to what our Godly Reformers, and holy Martyrs had sealed with their dearest Blood.

Secondly, Should they say, they know the Doctrines are true, but they fear the Displeasure of the People; then this Consequence must necessarily follow, that they fear the People more than God; for their Fear of him is taught by the Precepts of Men: And consequently, should the People come to see this clearly, they will hate them for their perfidious Dealing, and look out for wiser, better, and more faithful Guides.

Should our Admirals, and other Officers at Sea, employ'd against the Spaniards, be as ignorant, and false to the State, as a great Part of the Clergy are in Doctrines; I fear, we should have but a poor Account of their Conduct: But, blessed be God, they have Skill, Faithfulness, and Courage, in the Great Affairs committed to their Charge.

*But Oh! what Shame and Reproach doth this cast on the Clergy? I pray God, to awaken them to a Sense of their Duty, that they may see from whence they are fallen, and may repent of all their Errors and Omissions: I say this, because I would have them do the Things that are excellent; that God may be honour'd,
and*

and they be better beloved, and esteemed in all Respects, than they are among the People.

As no Person can give an higher Demonstration of his Love to another, than by telling him his Faults, in Order to his Amendment ; so I hope, if in the Following Sheets any Thing may be said, which shall be for Caution, or Conviction ; for Instruction, or Reproof ; that God will please to say Amen to it.

My Design in this Publication is the Good both of Ministers and People, that the Former may not preach, nor the Latter hear in vain ; but that the Word preach'd may come from, and reach to the Heart, and be the Saviour of Life unto Life to many. And what can be more necessary for a Preacher to know ? and what can reflect a greater Comfort to his Soul to think, than that He can approve both himself, and his Doctrines to the God of Truth, and Judge of all the Earth ? And again, what can be more necessary for the People to know, than how, and what to hear for the Salvation of their Souls.

The Consideration of these Things have lain with great Weight on my Mind, and as I am going off the Stage of the World, so for the Peace of my own, and the Good of your precious, and immortal Souls, I could not perform a kinder, or juster Part, than in Communicating these Things to the World. Thus recommending them and You to the Blessing of GOD, I am

Your Real Friend, & Humble Servant,

JONATH. WARNE.



Some Ecclesiastical

COLLUSIONS

DISCOVER'D:

Being a DISCOURSE between a
Minister, and a Methodist.

Minister. *W*ELL met, my Old Acquaintance; I am glad to see You, but I am sorry to see your Seat empty at Church: I hear, You frequent the Meetings of the Methodists; and are an Admirer of that Raw Novice's Preaching, and Writings; I mean Whitefield, that Upstart Fellow: And since You live in my Parish, it is my Business to take Care of your Soul, that You may not be seduced, and led away with Error and Delusions.

Methodist. Souls are precious Things, and call for our uttermost Care; but how comes it to pass, that You single out me, and two or three more, that go among the Methodists, as the only Objects of your Pastoral Concern; seeing that You never asked me, nor hundreds

B

dreds

dreds more in your Parish, one Question about the State of our Souls these thirty Years; so that here is some Mystery in this your sudden pretended Care of Souls. Indeed, I cannot but wonder, that a Man thus careful of the Souls of Others, should be so careless of his own; but I can see thorow the Pretence without the Help of a Pair of Spectacles, for had I been a profligate Person, and kept to the Church, You would never have said a Word to me on this Matter; so that Your great Care of me proceeds from other Aims and Ends, I am well assur'd.

Min. What would You have Us do more than we do? Would You have us preach, and pray; expound, and sing Psalm, and Hymns; and visit as some of the Methodists do? This would be the Way to make ourselves Slaves; but I am for my Pipe, my Bottle, and my Ease, let them take what Way they please; I shall never follow that Way, to make a Drudge of myself, I assure You.

Meth. There is no Occasion to give your Oath on that; for I believe You without it: I may say to You as *Country Roger* said to the *Parson*, who pretended he came to talk with him about his Soul, as You do with me now.
 ' We have just Cause (*says he* *) to complain
 ' of too many that appear in the Pulpit, who
 ' are no Credit at all to the sacred Function;

* The Dissenting Laity pleading their own Cause against the Clamours and Calumnies of the High-flying Clergy; &c.
 P. 3.

' but

' but rather a stumbling Block to all good
 ' Men, and do more hurt than good. What
 ' a dark Fry of raw *Levites* have we in Coun-
 ' try Towns, and Parishes remote from *Lon-*
 ' *don*, that wou'd make a Man sick to hear
 ' 'em ; and tempt him to turn *Atheist* to look
 ' into their Conversations: They preach the
 ' People asleep one Part of the Day, and
 ' drink some of 'em asleep the other ; they
 ' make us a poor, thin, single-soal'd Sermon
 ' in the Morning, but can take a double Glais
 ' at Night, much more warming than the
 ' Morning's Discourse ; and commonly that
 ' poor, single-ey'd Oration is as much adapted
 ' to the poor Country People, as *Homer's*
 ' *Iliads* is to a Ploughman.

From this small Hint, You may perceive
 how Things were thirty, or forty Years ago ;
 and they have been growing worse, and worse
 ever since ; and, as that pious young Man,
 Mr. *Whitefield* has often said, *We are in a*
Spiritual Lethargy. This, God knows, is a
 Truth ; and thousands in this Nation who
 were troubled with it, will have Cause to
 bless God to all Eternity, for sending him
 among us to sound an Alarum in our Ears.

Mr. *Whitefield* was the first Person, who
 was made an Instrument in the Hand of God,
 of shewing me my fatal Mistake with respect
 to the *New Birth*, or *Regeneration* ; for God
 knows, that I, and Thousands of poor, ig-
 norant Persons thought, that we were made
Members of Christ, and *Children of God*, by

Virtue of *Water* in my Infancy ; but he occasionally shew'd us, that we must have *Christ formed in our Souls*, and be made *New Creatures*, or we should never be *saved*.

This put me to *search the Scriptures*, and to call my Soul to answer how it was as to this Matter ; and I found I knew no more of this Work wrought upon it, than a blind Man does of Colours : And to deal plainly with You, I, and some more of your Parish are very angry with You, and Others of the *Clergy*, who never acquainted us with the sad Mistake we were under ; for I now perceive, thro' the great Goodness of God, in illuminating my dark Understanding, that I was a Brand in the Fire by Nature ; but God has so bless'd that pious young Man's Preachings and Writings, that I am, I trust, *regenerated*, and *born again* : For I find *New Thoughts*, and *New Desires*, *New Aims* and *Ends* ; God be praised for his Goodness to me a profane Wretch as I was. I now prize, and value the precious *Redemption* wrought out by my Dear Lord, and Saviour, for me his unworthy Child. The firm Belief of this is to me the strongest Incentive to a holy Life, and Conversation in the World that I ever felt, or experienc'd. I can truly say, my Walk among God's People is with Chearfulness, and Thankfulness to him, who has promis'd that *He will never leave me, nor forsake me* ; and in this firm Persuasion I press forward. It was well said by One, *If You would be quickened, You must keep quickened*
Com-

Company; that is, Those who have the Love of God shed abroad in their Souls by the Spirit of Christ; and so I do, and find them such Persons.

Minister. You are so much for inward Feeling, and Experience, as You call it, that a Man knows not what to do with You; but Dr. Trapp, and the Bishop of London have drawn out the Methodists to the Life.

Meth. I have read Dr. Trapp's Discourses, and think I never met with a more jejune, and weak Performance in my Life: Let me tell You, what I know to be true, that many of his Friends blame him, for laying himself so open to publick Contempt: Several have answer'd him so closely, that he cannot reply to them in any Manner, but wherein his Weakness will be more expos'd; and therefore, it is in him a Proof of Wisdom, if he ever had any, to continue silent; tho' at the same time, when I consider the Length of Time he has been employ'd in the Work of the Ministry, I cannot but wonder, he is so great a Nicodemus in the Things of God, and the Operations of his Blessed Spirit; concerning which, I hope thro' Grace, there are many unlearned Persons in human Literature, who are better able to give a Reason of the Hope that is in them, than many who pretend to be Teachers of Others.

As for the Bishop of London's Pastoral Letter, it is answer'd by Mr. Seagrave, one of his own Brethren; and by Mr. Whitefield: I can-

cannot see what Reply he can make to them, so that I beg You would never quote them as Defenders of your Cause ; which is a poor, and weak One, upon my Word.

Min. *You seem to be very stiff in yur Way, what will You do now your Beloved Whitefield is gone ? I am apt to think You will drop this way, and come to Church again.*

Meth. I am fully persuaded that Time will never come ; except You preach up those Fundamental Doctrines You are departed from, and lead your Lives more agreeable to the Word of God : For Thousands in this Nation will say it, that your Lives are a dark Copy to write after, and very unfit for Imitation ; and God knows, it is too true, I speak it with Sorrow of Soul.

Upon Reading a small Treatise, intituled *The Tryal of Spirits* ; wrote by that faithful Preacher, and Servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. *William Dell*, Master of *Gonvil*, and *Caius-College* in *Cambridge* ; I found there set down Nine Signs of a True Preacher. These, upon mature Consideration, I think very pertinent to be here inserted, by Reason of the Wickedness of the Age, and the Supineness of a greater Part of the Clergy ; who, having departed from their orthodox Doctrines, are highly exasperated against, and labouring to suppress those Persons, who seem to be raised up by God for the Revival of his precious, and too much neglected Truths ; both which they daily endeavour to render contemptible in the
Eyes

Eyes of the People : But let me tell You, that your Principles, and your Practices are so well known to them ; that the more they look into your Conduct, the less they like You ; and grow more and more out of Love with You.

But to return to what I mention'd before concerning the *Nine Signs of a True Prophet, or Teacher*, set forth by that Faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, and of your own Church, Mr. *William Dell* ; as what he there says, may, in great measure, be suitable to the present Time ; I, therefore, take the Liberty to quote him in his own Words as follow.

* Here (says he *) I shall give you many
' Tryals, how you may certainly know, and
' discern the *false Prophets of Antichrist* from
' the true, humble, and faithful *Ministers of*
' *Jesus Christ*.

' And the Lord *Jesus Christ*, before whom
' we are all present this Day ; and before
' whose *Tribunal* we shall be judged ; He
' knows that I shall not *purposely* speak any
' Thing at this Time, either to *please myself*,
' or to *displease you* ; but I shall desire to speak
' all out of very *Faithfulness* to Him, who
' hath remember'd me, when I was in low Con-
' dition, for his Mercy endureth for ever.

' The *First Sign* then, whereby the *True*
' *Prophets* may be discern'd from the
' *False*, is this :

* Mr. Dell's Tryal of Spirits. 4to. p. 21, &c.

' *First*.

' First, The True Prophets are all sent of
 ' God. So was Moses, whom God sent to the
 ' Children of Israel, and bid him tell them,
 ' that I AM, even the God of Abraham,
 ' Isaac, and Jacob, had sent him to them; and
 ' he gave him a proportionable measure of
 ' his Presence, to cause them to believe it.
 ' And Christ, a greater Prophet than Moses,
 ' even the Head of all the Children of God,
 ' said by *Isaiab*, ch. 48. 16. Come ye near
 ' unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in
 ' secret from the beginning, and now the Lord
 ' and his Spirit hath sent me. And every
 ' where in the Gospel, He still declares, how
 ' He came not of himself, but his Father sent
 ' him.

' And as the Father sent Christ, so Christ
 ' sends all his Seed, the True Ministers of the
 ' Gospel; as is manifest *John* 20. 21. where
 ' Christ said to his Disciples, As my Father
 ' hath sent me, so send I you; which he spake
 ' not only touching them, but touching all
 ' that should believe in his Name thro' their
 ' their Word. And Paul also saith *Rom.*
 ' 10. 15. How shall they teach except they be
 ' sent? So that True Preaching comes from
 ' True Sending, and this comes from the Grace
 ' of God.

' Now I desire you farther to take No-
 ' tice, that God hath reckoned the Choice of
 ' his Ministers, one of the weightiest Things
 ' that belong unto his Kingdom; wherefore
 ' He would never commit the Trust of this
 ' to

to any Sort of Men whatsoever. Yea, *Christ*
 himself did not *choose* his Disciples at his
 own *human Will*, but only at the *Will* of
 God; and therefore was much in Prayer
 before he chose them.

And the *Apostles* themselves durst not of
 themselves, when they were all met toge-
 ther, *choose* any One into the Room of *Ju-*
das; but they betook themselves to Prayer,
 and desired the Lord to show *whom he had*
chosen. And *Acts* 13. The Spirit said, *Se-*
parate me Barnabas and Saul for the Work
whereunto I have called them. And Paul
 tells the *Galatians*, that he was an *Apostle*,
 not of Men, nor by Men, but by *Jesus Christ*,
 and God the Father.

By all which *Scriptures* we may perceive
 what Care the Lord has always had, to send
 his own *Ministers* himself into his own Church;
 and would have his true Church receive no
 Ministers, but such as He sends them.

And the great, and chief Sending into the
 Church, is from God himself; as we see in
 Moses, and all the *Prophets*; and in *Christ*
 himself the Head of them, and in all the
Apostles, and all Believers.

Now the Proof of a Man's Sending from
 God is this, to be anointed with the Spirit;
 as *John* 20. 22, When *Christ* said to his Dis-
 ciples, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*.
 He breathed upon them, and said, *Receive*
the Holy Spirit: For his Father sent him
 only by pouring out his Spirit on him; and
 C. he

' he sends *them* so, *only*; and he that saith,
 ' *The Unction of the Spirit alone is not suffi-*
 ' *cient for the Ministry of the New Testament*;
 ' he denies *Christ*, and his *Apostles* to have
 ' been *sufficient* Ministers, and he *perverts* the
 ' *Scripture*, and *seduces* the People.

' Now the *true Teachers* thro' the *pouring*
 ' *forth* of the *Spirit* on them they do truly
 ' know *Christ himself*, and the great *Mystery*
 ' of the Gospel, and all the *Things* that are
 ' freely given us of *God*; and they are also
 ' filled with *Love* to their *Brethren*, and are
 ' enabled to *confess* the Truth, and to do here-
 ' after, and to *contemn* the *World*, and pati-
 ' ently to *suffer* Rebukes; all which is a *suf-*
 ' *ficient Proof* of any Ones sending from *God*.

' And thus the *true Prophets* are all *sent* of
 ' *God*, which is their great Comfort and Sup-
 ' port in all Trouble and Difficulties, because
 ' *He that sends them is still with them*. Loe
 ' (says *Christ*) *I am with you always to the*
 ' *End of the World*.

' But now on the contrary, the *False Pro-*
 ' *phets* and *Ministers of Antichrist* are not *sent*
 ' of *God*, but are sent, and appointed by *Men*;
 ' and that through *their own Desire*, and seek-
 ' ing. And of such the Lord complains, *Jer.*
 ' 23. 21. *I have not sent these Prophets, yet*
 ' *they ran*; *I have not spoken to them, yet they*
 ' *prophefied*: But because *I sent them not, nei-*
 ' *ther commanded them, they shall not profit*
 ' *this People at all*; saith the Lord v. 32.

• And

‘ And *Christ* says, *Many false Christs, and false Prophets shall arise.* And *Paul* says to the *Elders* of the Church of *Ephesus*, *Acts* 20. *Out of yourselves shall Men arise, speaking perverse Things to draw Disciples after them.* They arise of themselves, they are not sent of God.

‘ Now such Teachers as these do usually spring up in the Church, thro’ *Academical Degrees*, and *Ecclesiastical Ordination*; which two Things have poured forth into the Church whole *Swarms of false Prophets*, and *Antichristian Ministers*, never sent of God, nor anointed of his Spirit, to the *irreparable Damage, Prejudice, and Rain* of the People and Nation who have receiv’d them, with their *false, and poisonous Doctrine.*

‘ Wherefore all those Teachers, who are not sent of the Lord and his Spirit, but arise of themselves, and come into the Church in the *Strength and Might* of their *Degrees and Orders*, they are all *false Prophets.*” Now, Sir, by this first Sign it is no difficult Matter to discover the *true*, from the *false Prophets*, or *Preachers*; and *who*, among all our Preachers, seem to bear the Character of the sent of God; whether they who engag’d in the Work of the Ministry, without a Prospect of *Ecclesiastical Honours and Profits*; or they who set out with an View to Both? But be that as it will, the Clergy do not fail, under the *Rose*, to make the *Honour of God*, and the *Salvation of Souls*, the grand Pretence for

taking upon them the holy Function ; how careless, or negligent soever they may be in the Performance of it.

Suppose there were such Persons, as were reputed Men of Sense, and Fortune, in this Kingdom, who should imagine themselves to have those Qualifications as should fit them for Ambassadors ; and thro' a Desire of making themselves great in the Eyes of the People, should take upon them to go as such to Foreign Courts, without the King's Orders, and Credentials ; would not such a Way of Procedure be highly resented, and accounted a superlative Act of Impudence and Insolence, and justly merit a rigorous Punishment ? Even so will the Majesty of Heaven deal to those, who shall pretend to go forth in his Name and Service without his Warrant, and Authority : Therefore let them look to it, who shall thus dare to do ; for he will not fail to give them their just Punishment either in this, or the World to come.

This may serve as a sure Word of Reproof to all *Preachers*, or *Teachers*, who run before they are sent ; whose Call is not of God ; but Man. And should any One ask me what are the Qualifications and Call of a True Gospel Preacher ; I answer, 1st. He must be a Man *regenerated*, or *born again*. 2^{dly}. He must have *Ministerial Qualifications*, so as rightly to understand, and divide the Words of Truth, and to govern with Love and Care the Flock of Christ, of which the Holy Ghost calls him
to

to be *Ovrseer*. 3dly. As to his *Call*; They who are spiritual are the most proper Judges of his *Qualifications*; and after being fully persuaded of them, must give him a *Call* to that Office.

Min. *I perceive, Mr. Methodist, You are pretty well improv'd in the Doctrines of Your Field Preachers; especially in those of your famous Whitfield, whom You, to be sure, have a Notion is sent of God; as also this Church-Divine, whose Writings You are very fond of, and which You here quote for a Proof of our Degeneracy from the Primitive Doctrines of our Excellent Church. But however, I pray You go on, and let me hear what he has further to say.*

Meth. Well Sir, since I have your Authority to go on, I come now to

The Second Sign.

' The True Prophets, who are sent of God,
' take all their *Warrant* and *Authority* from
' God, for what they teach; and do not at
' all regard Men, or build on them. And this
' has all along made the true Teachers so bold,
' and so confident, in the Name of God against
' the World, and worldly Church. So *Isaiab*
' 50. 4. &c. says, *The Lord hath given me the*
' *Tongue of the learned, that I should know*
' *how to speak a Word in due Season to him*
' *that is weary; he wakeneth Morning by*
' *Morning; he wakeneth my Ear to hear as*
' *the learned.*

' The

‘ *The Lord God hath opened mine Ear, and*
 ‘ *I was not rebellious, neither turned away*
 ‘ *back.*

‘ *For the Lord God will help me, therefore*
 ‘ *shall I not be confounded; therefore have I*
 ‘ *set my Face as a Flint, and I know I shall*
 ‘ *not be ashamed.*

‘ *He is near that justifies me, who will con-*
 ‘ *tend with me; let us stand together, who is*
 ‘ *mine Adversary, let him come near me.*

‘ *Behold the Lord will help me, who is he*
 ‘ *that shall condemn me? Lo! they all shall*
 ‘ *wax old as a Garment, the Moth shall eat*
 ‘ *them up.*

‘ *And so also our Lord Jesus Christ in the*
 ‘ *Days of his Flesh, how bold was He in his*
 ‘ *Ministry, coming in the Name of the Lord;*
 ‘ *and having his Authority, and Doctrine*
 ‘ *from Him, how boldly did He reprove the*
 ‘ *Scribes and Pharisees, the chief Teachers*
 ‘ *of the Jewish Church? And what a clear,*
 ‘ *and glorious Confession of the Truth of God,*
 ‘ *did he hold forth against all their Opposition*
 ‘ *and Contradiction?*

‘ *And the Apostles, when the Rulers, El-*
 ‘ *ders, and Scribes, and Annas the High Priest,*
 ‘ *and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander,*
 ‘ *and all the Kindred of the High Priest were*
 ‘ *gathered together, and threatened them, and*
 ‘ *straitly charged them, to preach no more in*
 ‘ *that Name; they answered, Whether it be*
 ‘ *right in the Sight of God, to hearken unto*
 ‘ *you more than unto God, judge ye: For we*
 can-

' cannot but speak the Things which we have
' seen and heard. Acts 4. 19.

' And so *Wickliffe*, *John Hus*, and *Luther*,
' who were sent of God, did take all their
' Authority from God alone; and so were
' bold and confident, each of them in their
' Time, against the whole World.

' But now the false Prophets, who come of
' themselves, and by the sending of Men, they
' do all by the Authority and Warrant of
' Man; and accordingly do join themselves
' together by *secular Power*, to bring about
' their *Doctrines* and *Designs* in the Church;
' and from the *Civil Authority* they procure
' Leave and Power to publish their *Doctrine*,
' and set up their *Discipline* in the Church,
' and to suppress whatever is contrary thereto;
' and without this worldly License and Au-
' thority, they neither can nor dare do any
' Thing; and are never bold, but when the
' Authority of Man is for them. But the
' true Prophets (as has been said) do only
' take their Authority from Christ for what
' they teach, and are bold in his Name only
' to hold it forth; and so after they have pub-
' lished the Word in Faith, in the same Faith
' they leave the Maintenance and Defending
' of it to Him alone, whose Word it is; and
' they neither publish it for Man's Command-
' ing, nor smother it for Man's Forbidding.

' Wherefore those Teachers, who have not
' their Warrant from Christ for their Doc-
' trine, and are not bold in his Name alone,
' but

but do derive all their Authority, and Encouragement from *Men*, to speak, and act in the Things of *God*, they are all *false Prophets*, and *Ministers of Antichrist*.

Here it may not be improper to mention what a late Excellent Bishop of the Church of *England* says, in a *Preface of his Charge to his Clergy* : * Our *Ember Weeks* are the Grief and Burden of my Life : The much greater Part of those who come to be ordained, are ignorant to a Degree not to be apprehended by those who are not oblig'd to know it : The easiest Part of Knowledge is that to which they are the greatest Strangeness ; I mean the plainest Parts of the Scriptures ; which, they say, in Excuse of this Ignorance, that their Tutors in the University never mentioned the Reading of them : So that they can give no Account, or at least but a very imperfect one, of the Contents even of the Gospels. Those who have read some few Books, yet never seem to have read the Scriptures : Many cannot give a tolerable Account even of the *Catechism* itself, how short, and plain soever : They cry, and think it a Disgrace to be denied Orders, tho' the Ignorance of some is such, that in a well-regulated State of Things, they would appear not knowing enough to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament ; this does often tear my Heart. The

* Bp Burnet's New Preface, p. 5, 6.

‘ Case is not much better in many, who, having got into Orders, come for Institution ; and cannot make it appear that they have read the *Scriptures*, or *any one good Book*, since they were ordain’d.” *Thus far this judicious Bishop.* What Person, who knows the Worth of his precious Soul, will trust it with such blind Guides ? My Blood runs cold while I am transcribing this melancholy Paragraph. Were five hundred Persons to embark in a Ship, which was going a long, and dangerous Voyage ; and there were several Persons in her, who, tho’ they understood not one Point of the Compass, nor had the least true Knowledge of Navigation, should yet pretend to pilot her the Voyage ; would not those Persons be uneasy with such Pilots, tho’ a Person ever so skilful should give it under his Hand that they might arrive with Safety to their intended Port. How then can People be easy under such Guides of Mens Souls, as this late Excellent Father of the Church laments over. I pray God, this may have its due Weight on the Minds of all who read this ; for it is a shocking Consideration.

Min. Pray Sir, who of our Clergy denies the Truth of what your Authors here say ; and do not in our Turns, upon proper Occasions, speak as having our Warrant, and Authority from Christ ; and that with Boldness in his Name, without regarding either the Fear, or Favour of Man. And I could produce several Instances of Clergymen, who, with great Judg-

D

ment

‘ but do derive all the'r Authority, and Encouragement from *Men*, to speak, and act in the Things of *God*, they are all *false Prophets*, and *Ministers of Antichrist*.

Here it may not be improper to mention what a late Excellent Bishop of the Church of *England* says, in a *Preface of his Charge to his Clergy* : ‘ * Our *Ember Weeks* are the Grief and Burden of my Life : The much greater Part of those who come to be ordain'd, are ignorant to a Degree not to be apprehended by those who are not oblig'd to know it : The easiest Part of Knowledge is that to which they are the greatest Strangeness ; I mean the plainest Parts of the Scriptures ; which, they say, in Excuse of this Ignorance, that the'r Tutors in the University never mentioned the Reading of them : So that they can give no Account, or at least but a very imperfect one, of the Contents even of the Gospels. Those who have read some few Books, yet never seem to have read the Scriptures : Many cannot give a tolerable Account even of the *Catechism* itself, how short, and plain soever : *They cry*, and think it a Disgrace to be denied Orders, tho' the Ignorance of some is such, that in a well-regulated State of Things, they would appear not knowing enough to be admitted to the Holy Sacrament ; this does often tear my Heart. The

* Bp Burnet's New Preface, p. 5, 6.

‘ Case is not much better in many, who, having got into Orders, come for Institution ; and cannot make it appear that they have read the *Scriptures*, or *any one good Book*, since they were ordain’d.” *Thus far this judicious Bishop.* What Person, who knows the Worth of his precious Soul, will trust it with such blind Guides ? My Bloods runs cold while I am transcribing this melancholy Paragraph. Were five hundred Persons to embark in a Ship, which was going a long, and dangerous Voyage ; and there were several Persons in her, who, tho’ they understood not one Point of the Compass, nor had the least true Knowledge of Navigation, should yet pretend to pilot her the Voyage ; would not those Persons be uneasy with such Pilots, tho’ a Person ever so skilful should give it under his Hand that they might arrive with Safety to their intended Port. How then can People be easy under such Guides of Mens Souls, as this late Excellent Father of the Church laments over. I pray God, this may have its due Weight on the Minds of all who read this ; for it is a shocking Consideration.

Min. Pray Sir, who of our Clergy denies the Truth of what your Authors here say ; and do not in our Turns, upon proper Occasions, speak as having our Warrant, and Authority from Christ ; and that with Boldness in his Name, without regarding either the Fear, or Favour of Man. And I could produce several Instances of Clergymen, who, with great Judg-
D
ment

ment and Piety, and with great Courage too, have defended the Doctrines of the Church of England; which is a Church, that has been esteem'd a pure, and orthodox Church of Christ, by many Learned, and Judicious Divines both at Home and Abroad; consequently then her Doctrines must be the Doctrines of Christ, and the Preaching up, and Defending these Doctrines must be preaching Christ, and maintaining his Authority. However pray go on, and let us hear what he has further to say.

Meth. With your Leave, Sir, before I pass further, I will readily allow, that there were such Preachers at the *Reformation*, and some Time after; yet, grievous to think on! many of your Clergy have since sadly degenerated from those pure, and primitive Truths, which they then boldly maintain'd: I must own, indeed, there have of late Years, been such, of whom my Author speaks, who have *ran* before they were *sent*; and with a superlative Boldness, have taken upon them to advance the Power of the Priest almost, if not altogether, to that of the Prince; and with an Air, and Assurance peculiar to themselves, have traduc'd, and censur'd Him, and his Administration; and when they could not do this to that Height of Insolence they wish'd for; then some, or all His Ministry came in for a Share of their Raileries: And when Subjects of this Kind were wanting, and that their Talents might be still in Exercise, then some Party, or Body of People of one Denomination, or another

ther, have suffer'd the Persecution of their Tongues. Instances of these Kinds, I allow, there have been several ; and upon Occasion, I could collect a Volume of them. But, Sir, this is not preaching *Christ*, and *Him crucified* ; nor *Salvation by Him alone*. This is not preaching the Riches of Free Grace, and the Great Mercy of God in *Christ* to the vilest of Sinners, as the despised *Methodists* do. This is not preaching up the *Love of God to a wicked World, at Enmity with Him* ; and from thence to urge his Example for us to *love one another, as Christ has loved us, and given himself for us*. But on the contrary, because these pious, young Men have reviv'd, and preach'd up the neglected Doctrines of the Gospel, and of our blessed *Reformers*, they are not only debarr'd your Pulpits, but are reproach'd, and aspers'd, as if they were Enemies to *Religion*, and *Godliness* ; when all their Endeavours do plainly appear to be the Promotion of Both. I will now go on, since You say You will have Patience to hear me ; and therefore, I offer to your serious Consideration

The Third Sign.

' The *true*, and *faithful Teachers*, as they are
' sent of God, and take their *Authority* from
' Him, so in all their Doctrine they only hold
' forth *Jesus Christ*, and this they have learned
' from God : For,

' The *Father* himself speaking immedi-
' ately from *Heaven*, preached nothing but
' *Christ* ; saying, *This is my beloved Son*, in

' whom I am well pleased, hear him : And
 ' this He spake thrice from the Excellent Glo-
 ' ry ; manifesting, that He Himself had no
 ' higher Thing, nor no other Thing to de-
 ' clare to the World, than his Son *Jesús*
 ' *Christ* ; in whom alone are hid all the Treas-
 ' ures of true, and spiritual *Wisdom*, and
 ' *Knowledge*.

' The Son also in all his Ministry, only de-
 ' clared who *Himself* was, whom the Father
 ' had given to the *Eleēt Church* ; saying *Psal.*
 ' 2. I will publish the Decree, whereof the
 ' Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son,
 ' this Day have I begotten thee. And in all
 ' his Ministry only declared *Who* he was, and
 ' to what *End* his Father had given him ;
 ' saying, I am the Bread of Life, which cometh
 ' down from Heaven ; he that cometh to me
 ' shall never hunger, and he that believeth in
 ' me shall never thirst. And I am the Way,
 ' the Truth, and the Life, no Man cometh to
 ' the Father but by me : And all his *Doctrīne*
 ' and *Works* were to this *End*, that we might
 ' believe that *Jesús* is the Son of God, and that
 ' believing in him we might have eternal Life.

' The *Apostles* also of the Lord, after they
 ' had received the *Spirit*, did go up and down
 ' the World, only preaching *Jesús*, and Re-
 ' pentance, and Remission of Sins in his Name.

' And *Paul*, a laborious Preacher, thro' the
 ' Grace of God, did renounce, and reject all
 ' his worldly Learning, and all his human Ac-
 ' complishments and Excellencies, as himself te-

stifies

' stifies ; *Phil. 3. 7, &c.* saying, *What Things*
 ' *were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for*
 ' *Christ: Yea doubtless, and I count all Things*
 ' *but Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge*
 ' *of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have*
 ' *suffered the Loss of all Things, and do count*
 ' *them but Dung, that I may win Christ. And*
 ' *be found in him, not having mine own Righteousness,*
 ' *which is of the Law, but that which*
 ' *is through the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness*
 ' *which is of God by Faith. That I may*
 ' *know him, and the Power of his Resurrection,*
 ' *and the Fellowship of his Sufferings, and be*
 ' *made conformable unto his Death ; if by any*
 ' *Means I might attain unto the Resurrection*
 ' *of the Dead.*

' And he also tells the *Corinthians*, that he
 ' *desired to know nothing amongst them, but Je-*
 ' *sus Christ, and him crucified.*

' And thus the *True Teachers* preach no-
 ' thing but *Christ*, and *Him* they preach, not
 ' according to their own *human Conceptions*
 ' and *Apprehensions* ; but according to the
 ' *Revelation* they have received from the *Fa-*
 ' *ther* by the *Spirit*.

' But on the contrary, the *False Teachers*
 ' preach nothing less than *Christ*, and *Faith in*
 ' *him* ; but they chiefly teach the *Law*, and *mo-*
 ' *ral Doctrine*, and *Works* ; or else *Philosophy*,
 ' and *philosophical Subtilties*, and *Speculations* ;
 ' which yet the *Apostle* hath expressly for-
 ' bidden, *Col. 2. 8.* saying to the faithful, *Be-*
 ' *ware lest any Man spoil you, through Philoso-*
 ' *phy*

‘ *phy and vain Deceit, after the Tradition of
 ‘ Men, after the Elements of the World, and
 ‘ not after Christ; for in Him dwells the Ful-
 ‘ ness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are com-
 ‘ pleat in him, who is the Head of all Princi-
 ‘ pality and Power: And so we need not turn
 ‘ from Christ to Philosophy that vain Deceit.*

‘ Wherefore they who preach not the Mi-
 ‘ nistry of Christ, thro’ the Revelation of the
 ‘ Father, and the Spirit, but *moral Vertues,*
 ‘ and *vain Philosophy*, instead of Christ, are
 ‘ all of them *false Prophets, and Ministers of*
 ‘ *Antichrist.*” Now Sir, if this godly Mi-
 nister of Jesus Christ thus complain’d 86 Years
 ago, what would he now say, was he to be a-
 mongst us, and to hear the Doctrines of our
 polite Preachers at this Day; many of whom
 have never mention’d the Name of our *Lord*
Jesus Christ in all their Sermons, but at the
Benediction; and as this worthy Author well
 observes, are full of the high Flights of *Phi-*
losophy, and sophistical Subtillties.

Min. I find Mr. Methodist, for so I must
 call You, while You remain on this Side of the
 Argument, You copy very well after your Au-
 thors; but to tell You plainly, the People of this
 Age are grown so polite, and witty, that we
 are forced to study fine Phrases, and eloquent
 Expressions; for if we did not use this Method,
 we should have none come to hear us.

Meth. Then I find, Sir, that the main
 Study of a great Part of your Brethren, is the
 Praise of Man, and not the Glory of God; which

which all true Ministers of Jesus Christ should chiefly be concern'd to promote. But I pass on to

The Fourth Sign.

' The True Ministers, and Prophets of Christ, as they only hold forth Christ, so they only hold him forth, for the Love of God, and their Brother, and not any worldly Profit, or Gain.

' Thus Christ taught his Disciples out of the Love of God, as he saith ; *I delight to do thy Will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my Heart* ; that is, his Love to God : And also out of Love to his Brethren ; for having loved his own, he loved them to the End ; and out of this Love taught them, as he says ; *I have called you Friends, for whatsoever I have heard from my Father, I have declared unto you.* And as he taught out of Love Himself, so he has commanded all his to teach out of Love, and hath given them his Spirit, which is Love ; that thereby they might love both Him, and their Brethren ; and therefore Christ said thrice to Peter, *Peter, dost thou love me ? dost thou love me ? dost thou love me ? then feed my Sheep, my Lambs, and my Sheep.* And Paul saith, *The Love of Christ constrained him, to teach the Gospel ; and the Fruit of the Spirit in all Believers being Love, in this Brotherly Love, they serve one another in the Gospel.*

' And as Christ himself did not sell his spiritual Travel to his Church for worldly Profit

' *fit or Gain, no more do his true Seed, or*
 ' *Servants; for St. Paul says Acts 20. 33.*
 ' *I have coveted no Man's Silver or Gold, or*
 ' *Apparel; ye yourselves know, that these hands*
 ' *have ministred to my Necessity, and to them*
 ' *who were with me. And 2 Cor. 12. 14. Be-*
 ' *hold the third Time I am ready to come to*
 ' *you, I will not be burdensome to you; for I seek*
 ' *not yours but you. And ver. 17. Did I make*
 ' *a gain of you, by any of them whom I sent un-*
 ' *to you; or did Titus make a gain of you?*
 ' *walked we not both in the same Spirit.*

' And thus the *True Teachers* do not seek
 ' any *temporal Gain, or Commodity*, from the
 ' Hands of Men by their *Preaching*, but do
 ' truly, and chearfully teach out of the *Love*
 ' of *Christ*, and their *Brethren*.

' But on the contrary, the *false Teachers*, tho'
 ' they do not teach the *Gospel* (being destitute
 ' of the Spirit) but *vain Philosophy*, and hu-
 ' mane *Doctrines* instead of it, yet will they
 ' live by the *Gospel*: They will have the *tem-*
 ' *poral Goods* of the Church, and yet not mi-
 ' nister the *spiritual Treasure* of it; and what
 ' they do minister, they do it for *Reward*;
 ' as it is written *Micah 3. 11. The Priests*
 ' *teach for Hire, and the Prophets divine for*
 ' *Money; and he that putteth not into their*
 ' *Mouths, they even prepare War against him.*

' And to show they preach for the *Love*
 ' of *Gain*, they are brought up to the *Ministry*
 ' as to a *Trade* to live by; and they run in
 ' this Way from one Place to another; from

' a *lesser* to a *greater* Living ; and where they
 ' may *gain* most of this World, there will
 ' they be sure to be : Yea, so much are they
 ' addicted to their *worldly Advantage*, that
 ' they had rather *Christ's Kingdom* should ne-
 ' ver be set up in the World, nor *Antichrist's*
 ' ever be thrown down, than suffer any *Loss*,
 ' or *Diminution* in their Profit, Power, Dig-
 ' nity, Authority, or in any worldly Thing,
 ' whereof they have got the Possession, and
 ' Enjoyment.

' Wherefore they that teach *Christ*, not
 ' for the *Love* of *Christ*, and their *Brethren*,
 ' but for *temporal Gain*, and worldly Advan-
 ' tage only, are all of them *false Teachers*,
 ' and *Ministers of Antichrist*." Now Sir,
 what have You to say of this Author ? Is not
 this Truth ? Deny it, if You can. Nay, we
 find this Truth yet further confirm'd by *Fr.*
Quarles, Author of a Book, Intitled *Divine*
Fancies ; wherein speaking of an *Impropria-*
tor, he has the following Lines :

Lord ! how he swells, as if he had, at least,
A Common-wealth reposed in his Breast ;
A Common-wealth, 'twas shrewdly guess'd Itellye,
He bath a Leash of Churches in his Belly.
Prodigious Stomach ! what a cruel Deal
It can devour, whole Churches at a Meal.
It's very strange, that Nature should deliver
So good a Stomach to so bad a Liver.

*Lucro, it is believ'd, thy Conscience either
Is very wide, or made of stretching Leather.
Methinks thy Conscience rather seems too small,
So far from large, I fear, thou'st none at all.*

From hence You may see, that the greedy,
and covetous Desires of your Brethren after
Riches, has been a long Time Matter of fore
Complaint.

Min. *A Clergyman reputed to be rich, is,
no Doubt, a sad Eye-sore to some People ; but
I think, the few that are so, as, it is hoped, they
are helpful to the meaner Sort, I see no Reason
why their being rich should be a Reproach to
them. But I pray You to go on.*

Meth. I have no Prejudice against the
Clergy, I assure You, Sir ; but I esteem, and
honour all those among them, who preach,
and practise the real Truths of the Gospel of
Christ. However I pass on to

The Fifth Sign.

‘ The True Teachers teach Christ to others,
‘ as they have been taught him of God; only
‘ for the Glory of God, and not out of Vain-
‘ glory. Wherefore Christ said of himself,
‘ John 8. 50. *I seek not mine own Glory.* And
‘ John 7. 28. *He that speaketh of himself seek-*
‘ *eth his own glory; but he that seeketh the*
‘ *glory of him that sent him, the same is true,*
‘ *and no Unrighteousness is in him.* So that
‘ whoever speaketh from God, seeketh God’s
‘ glory. And so also Paul saith, 1 Thes. 2. 6.
‘ *Nor*

‘ Nor of Men sought we glory; neither of you,
‘ nor yet of others.

‘ So that the *True Teachers* do not preach
‘ the Word to win themselves *Glory* in the
‘ World, and *Praise* and *Applause* of Men;
‘ but do rather seek the *Glory* of God by their
‘ Doctrines, tho’ *Hypocrites*, and *carnal Peo-*
‘ *ple* for this Cause deride, and scorn them.

‘ But on the contrary, the *False Teachers*
‘ seek above all Things their *own Glory* by
‘ their Ministry: And to this End,

‘ 1. They get to themselves *Titles* and *De-*
‘ *grees* in the *University*, for their *pretended*
‘ *Knowledge* in *Divinity* above other *Chris-*
‘ *tians*; and by *these Degrees* they get the
‘ *uppermost Seats* in the *Synagogues* and *Greet-*
‘ *ings* in the *Markets*; and are called of Men
‘ *Doctor, Doctor*; which Christ hath expressly
‘ forbidden in his Gospel.

‘ 2. Having got such *Titles*, they go forth
‘ in their *own Name*, as Men of such *Religion*,
‘ *Learning*, *Reputation*, *Degrees*; and for such
‘ they make Account the World should *re-*
‘ *ceive* them.

‘ 3. They *especially* desire to preach to *rich*
‘ *Men*, and *great Men*, and Men in *Place* and
‘ *Authority*; that from *them* they may have
‘ *Protection*, *Favour*, *Preferment*, and a *quiet*
‘ *Life*, and care not much to preach to the
‘ *poor, plain, mean People*, from whom they
‘ can expect no *worldly Advantage*.

‘ 4. To this End also they speak in the
‘ Words which *Man’s Wisdom* teacheth, and

‘ so mingle *Philosophy* with *Divinity*, and
 ‘ think to *credit* the Gospel with *Terms of*
 ‘ *Art*; and do *sprinkle* their *Sermons* with *He-*
 ‘ *brew*, *Greek* and *Latin*, as with a *Perfume*
 ‘ acceptable to the *Nostrils* of the *World*.

‘ In a word, they preach all Things in a
 ‘ *pleasing Spirit* to the *World*, that they by
 ‘ all may get *Glory to themselves*; and may be
 ‘ accounted with *Simon Magus*, some great
 ‘ *Ones*: And in all this they shew they speak
 ‘ of *themselves*, and not of *God*, seeing they
 ‘ seek not *his Glory*, but *their own*; for *He*
 ‘ *that speaketh of Himself*, *seeketh his own*
 ‘ *Glory*.

‘ Wherefore they who by their Ministry
 ‘ do not seek the *Glory of God alone*, and of
 ‘ his Son *Jesus Christ*; but seek their *own*
 ‘ *Glory*, and the *Praise of Men*, as the *Clergy*
 ‘ generally do, and not the least of all in *this*
 ‘ *Place*; they are all of them *false Prophets*,
 ‘ and *Ministers of Antichrist*.” Now Sir,
 what think You of my Author? He was no
Methodist, I assure You; as You reproachfully
 call Mr. *Whitefield*, and his Brethren. He
 was *Master of a College*, and, without Doubt,
 a *Man of Learning*; or otherwise he had not
 been in that Post. He could, certainly, have
sprinkled his Sermons with Hebrew, Greek,
and Latin; as with a Perfume acceptable to
the Nostrils of the World: But on the contrary,
 he thought *Terms of Art*, and *Vain Philosophy*
 were so far from being a *Credit to the Gos-*
pel; that it rather brought a *Dis honour* upon,
 and

and Contempt to it. *Pompous Titles*, and *high Degrees* in the *University*, he thought no Addition to *Learning*, or *Knowledge*, and *Wisdom*; the Name of *Doctor*, with a great *Rose in the Hat*, and a *Scarff*, spreading like a *Sail*, how much soever the *Mind* might be on the *Wings of Fancy*; the *Head*, and *Heart*, he judg'd not much *wiser*, or *better*. He esteem'd him the *Truest Minister of Christ*, who copy'd the nearest to his *Master*; and with him accounted him the *greatest*, who was the *least among You*. Pray Sir, who now among all our *Clergy* come nearest to the *Divine Original*? They who, in their *Discourses*, use *fine Phrases* and *florid Expressions*; or those who preach the *Gospel* in *Purity* and *Plainness*; as that which must make *ignorant*, and *weak People* *wise unto Salvation*.

Min. I perceive, Mr. Methodist, that *Ecclesiastical Titles*, and *Degrees* are as great *Eye-sores to You*, as are the *Riches of the Clergy*: And I find, when You can hit upon the *Writings of an austere, or rigid Author*; or of a *Clergyman*, discontented for want of *Preferment in the Church*; You know how to improve, and apply them your *Way*. But I think, I need not tell You, what You cannot but know; that *Those, who were sent forth in the Beginning of the Gospel Dispensation*, were some *Prophets*, some *Apostles*, &c. all had not the same *Gifts*, nor were they alike in *Dignity or Office*; and therefore, I hope, this will serve to prevent your further *Reflections on this Head*; if it does
not

not quiet your Spirits. And I further tell You, that even the first Gospel-Ministers did not fail, sometimes, to speak authoritatively, with Regard to their Dignity, and Office. This Behaviour in us has been sadly misconstru'd by the People, and we have been loaded with their Reflections; but your Idol Whitefield must be blameless, tho' he has taken upon him to treat his Ecclesiastical Superiors in such a Manner, as very ill becomes his Profession and Character. But pray go on.

Meth. I perceive, Sir, You are angry; but I assure You I intended no Reflection on You, nor your Brethren; and if any Thing has flipt me not altogether so suitable to the Gravity of the Subject, I ask Pardon. However I now come to

The Sixth Sign.

' The True Preachers and Ministers of Christ, when they are opposed, resisted, slandered and persecuted for the Word's sake; they endure it with all Meekness, Humility, and Patience. Thus Christ endured all the Reproaches, Contradictions, Revilings, and Persecutions from the Jews; and when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Pet. 2. 23. And Paul saith of himself to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 12. 12. You had the Signs of my Apostleship in all Patience.

' But on the contrary, the false Teachers, when any Truth is impeached that they know not; or that is against their gain, or glory;

• glory; they snarle, and bark at it; and bite
 • them that bring it. And therefore saith
 • Paul, *Beware of Dogs*, Phil. 3. 2. not Dogs
 • by *Nature*, but by *Practice* and *Condition*.
 • Now a *curst Dog* lying on a *rich Garment*,
 • or *soft Carpet* at his Ease, as long as he may
 • lye still he is very quiet; but if You would
 • remove him from his Place, he soon *sharles*,
 • and *flies* at You, and shows of what *Mettle*
 • he is made: So the *false Teachers*, who have
 • gotten a *carnal Knowledge* of the *Word*,
 • and have thereby gotten *Preferment*, and
 • great *Advantages* in the World; they lye
 • quiet on these *soft Things*, as long as they
 • may lye still; but if any seek by the *Word*
 • of God to rouse them up from these Things,
 • they rise up like *angry Dogs*, and bark at
 • them, and rend them as much as they can,
 • or dare.

• Wherefore *those Teachers*, who cannot
 • patiently suffer *Wrongs* for the *Word's* sake;
 • but on the contrary, when they are reprov'd
 • by the *Word*, and their *Sheep's Cloathing*
 • pull'd off, even their false *Vizard* of Reli-
 • gion, and do presently grow impatient and
 • furious; and they that bark, and foam a-
 • gainst the late revealed *Truth*, which touch-
 • eth them very near; they are all *false Teach-*
 • • *ers*, and *Ministers of Antichrist*." Whom
 this Sign seems to point to, I leave You to
 judge; tho' I persuade myself, that if the
 Clergy had partook of the *Methodists* Suffer-
 ings; I fear, they would hardly have endur'd
 with

with that Meekness; and have so affectionately pray'd for them as Mr. *Whitefield* did; notwithstanding the many Taunts, and vile Reproaches he was every Day loaded with by them: And by what I have heard from them, and seen in Print against the *Methodists*; I am persuaded all the Clergy are not of the same Spirit with the meek, and humble Jesus; *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; and when he suffered, threatned not.* But some, on the contrary, without Provocation, or any other Cause, (unless from a Consciousness of their own neglected Duties) are greatly offended with them; and, for Want of Arguments more suitable to, and becoming of the Ministers of the Holy Jesus, have lustily call'd upon the *Secular Powers*, to do that for them, which is a shameful Scandal, and a notorious Sin against *Reason* and *Religion*, for themselves to call for, or the other to put in Practice; viz. the Suppression, and Persecution or Oppression of Men, for *Preaching Christ, and Him crucified*; not only to the *Jews* (but to many pretended Christians) a *Stumbling-block*; and to the *Greeks* (and many wise, and learned Men at this Day) *Foolishness*; but the *Wisdom and Power of God to them who believe, and receive him for the Salvation of their Souls.* I now pass on to

The Seventh Sign.

- ' The *True Prophets, and Ministers of Christ*
- ' do not force any Body to hear them, and obey
- ' their Doctrine against their Wills; neither
- : do

do they vex, and trouble them with *secular Power*, who will not *obey* them, and be *subject* to them; but they *leave* all such People as they *found* them, lest they should *seem* by their *Doctrine*, to seek any *worldly Thing*.

Thus *Christ*, when he taught the Gospel, still cried out, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear*; and he that had not *Ears to hear*, he did not *punish* him. And again saith *Christ*, *If any Man will be my Disciple, let him deny himself; and take up his Cross, and follow me*: He still left Men to their *own Freedom*, whether they would be his *Disciples* or no.

And as *Christ* did Himself, so he left the same in *Command* with all his *Disciples*; and when he sent them forth to preach, *Mat. 10.* he charged them saying, *Whoever will not receive you, nor bear your Words, when you depart out of that House or City, shake off the Dust of your Feet as a Testimony against them*; he doth not bid them if they be *refused*, to betake themselves to the *secular Power*; to get *Authority* from him to stay, and abide there *whether they will or no*, or otherwise to *punish* them; but bids them only to *shake off the Dust of their Feet*, that they might know, they came not to them for the *Love of earthly Things*. And when the *Apostles*, out of a *false Zeal*, would have had *Christ* to have commanded *Fire* to come down from *Heaven*, to have *destroyed* them that would not receive him; he plainly

reproved them, saying, *Ye know not of what Spirit ye are, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy Mens Lives, but to save them.*

It is recorded in the Life of Simon, and Jude, the Apostles; as both Gulielmus de sancto Amore, and John Hus also relate: That when the chief Ruler was very angry with those who defamed the Doctrine of those Apostles, and in great Zeal commanded a great Fire to be made, that such Opposers might be cast into it; The Apostles fell down before the Emperor, saying, *We beseech You, Sir, let not us be the Authors, or Causers of this Destruction, who are come to publish the Doctrine of eternal Salvation; neither let us who are sent to receive those who are dead through Sin, become the Killers of those who are alive.*

Wherefore those Teachers, who for worldly Advantage sake, will force themselves upon those Men against their Wills, who will not willingly receive them, and will provoke the worldly Powers and Magistrates to punish those who will not bear, and receive them, and their Doctrine; they are all false Prophets, and Ministers of Antichrist." Now Sir, if the True Preachers, or Ministers of Christ are not to force People to receive their Doctrine; nor to vex, and trouble them; but in Case of their Refusal they are only to shake off the Dust of their Feet as a Testimony against them; what can be said for those, who have been, or would be the Instigators, or Instruments of Vexation, and Trouble to the Methodists

dists at this Day? Against whom Dr. Trapp's urging the 72d. and 73d Canons of the Church of England, and the Laws of the Civil State; brings to my Remembrance, what a dismal Series of Persecution was the Reign of King Charles II. in which Thousands of Protestant Dissenters were put into Prisons; whose only Crime (tho' Popish Plots were continually hatch'd, and father'd upon them;) was practising Holiness in the Fear of God, in the Way which they thought most agreeable to his Word, and their own Consciences; many of whom dy'd there thro' Want, and ill Treatment: And multitudes of Others, tho' at Liberty, were continually harras'd; and oblig'd to pay Fines, or suffer the Loss of Goods, for going to a Meeting, or not coming to Church. And to convince You how little Knowledge there was in the Heads, as well as Grace in the Hearts of the Informers, and Others, who hunted, and tormented those innocent People; that on stopping one of their Ministers, and asking him Who he was? he made Answer, He was an Ambassador from the Lord of Hosts. Upon which another of their vile Crew asking the Person questioning Who he was, reply'd An Ambassador of the Lord of the Hosts; some Foreign Lord I suppose. And how right he spoke thro' Ignorance, I need take no Pains to prove; since he is, and always will be a Foreign Lord, to all those, who obey not his Commandments, and love not their Brethren. But give me Leave to mention one

Saying of the late Excellent Archbishop *Wake*, which suits the present Case ; viz. *What a Mercy it is, that We, the Clergy, are not let loose, to destroy one another.* From whence 'tis plain, that *worldly Powers* and *false Teachers* are improper Instruments to *punish* such People, who will not *hear* and *receive* them, nor their Doctrines, especially when they judge them not to be the Doctrines of Christ. However I pass on,

Min. *Pass on : Nay hold Mr. Methodist. I think You have taken your full Liberty with my Brethren and me ; by suggesting as tho' the Transactions of the State towards the Dissenters were then owing to the Clergy, or at their Instigation ; which I hope is false.*

Meth. What our blessed Lord observes, that *He who is not for us is against us*, is very applicable here ; inasmuch as we do not find there were any among your Order, who were Intercessors to the State on their Behalf : So far from a Service of that Kind, that when an unworthy Dr. of your Church, and one of the King's Chaplains (of the *Trapp-kind*) had challeng'd the whole Body of *Dissenters*, to shew the *Reasons of their Dissent* ; and One *Tho. Delaune* accepted the Challenge, his *Papers* were seiz'd at the *Press*, and his *Person* committed to *Newgate*, where himself, Wife, and Children were all starv'd to Death. Here's an Instance of Clergy Compassion ; and so much like the Devil, as tho' spit out of his Mouth ; first to tempt, and then to torment. I pass on to
The

The Eighth Sign.

‘ The *True Teachers* are content, that *others* should teach as well as *They*; and would not make a *Monopoly* of the *Ministry* to themselves alone, for worldly Advantage sake.

‘ Thus our *Lord Jesus Christ* did not content himself to preach the Gospel *alone*, but he sent forth *others*, as his Father sent forth him; yea, he *pours* forth his *Spirit* upon all *Flesh*, that *Sons*, and *Daughters*, and *Servants*, and *Handmaids* may prophesie; and so *Knowledge* cover the *Earth* as *Waters* the *Seas*. And to make the World *willing* to receive *such Teachers*; he saith, *He that receive you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.*

‘ And when *Eldad* and *Medad*, upon whom the *Spirit* of the *Lord* did rest, did *prophecy* in the Camp of *Israel*, without asking any *License* from *Moses*; and One told *Moses* of it in great Displeasure, and *Joshua* thereupon wished *Moses* to forbid them to *prophecy*; then *Moses* the meek Servant of the *Lord* reply’d, *Enviest thou for my sake? Would God (saith he) that all the Lord’s People were Prophets; and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all.* Numb. 11. 22. And so the godly Mind of any faithful Teacher desireth to be helped in the Work of the *Word*, that the precious *Truth* of the Gospel, which he himself *alone* cannot sufficiently express, all Mens *Tongues* might declare. And so they do not envy in others

‘ these

' those *spiritual* Gifts which God hath given
 ' them; but do wish, that *every Man* had a
 ' Mouth and Wisdom given him, to declare
 ' the *Mystery* of the *Gospel*, and the *infinite*
 ' Love, Mercy, Wisdom, Truth, Power, Re-
 ' demption, and Salvation of God by *Jesus*
 ' *Christ*; which cannot by *all Mens Tongues*
 ' be *sufficiently* published in the World.

' Farther, as no *worldly Prince*, or *Magis-*
 ' *trate* hath such unlimited Power over the
 ' Goods of the People, as to *forbid* them to
 ' give *corporal Alms* to them that stand in
 ' need, as Occasion is ministred; no more
 ' hath any *Power Ecclesiastical* or *Civil*, such
 ' Dominion over the *Word* and *Truth* of God,
 ' written by the *Spirit* in the Hearts of Be-
 ' lievers; but that they may at all Times,
 ' and upon all Occasions, minister *spiritual*
 ' *Alms* to them who stand in need by the
 ' *Teaching of the Gospel*.

' Wherefore *those Teachers*, who are *envi-*
 ' *ous*, that any should preach the Word but
 ' *themselves*, and their *own Tribe*, as they call
 ' it; (because they get *great worldly Advan-*
 ' *tage* thereby, whereas *otherwise* they would
 ' be contented that any should preach;) and
 ' so would have the *Civil Magistrate* only to
 ' *license Them* to be Preachers, because of their
 ' *Degrees and Orders*, and so forbid all *others*;
 ' they are all *false Teachers*, and *Ministers of*
 ' *Antichrist*." Here I beg Leave to observe,
 that the *Methodists* seem to bear this Descrip-
 tion of the Ministers of Jesus Christ, men-
 tioned

tioned under this Sign : For with what Fervency of Spirit did the pious Mr. *Whitefield* pray for *Hovel Harris* ; That he might be an Instrument in the Hand of God, for the Conversion of Thousands of Souls to our Lord Jesus Christ ; he knowing that God had richly endow'd him with Ministerial Gifts, tho' the Clergy refus'd to give him their Ordination. This now brings me to the

The Ninth Sign.

' The *True Teachers* do not only teach the
' *Word*, but are also ready to *seal* to the *Truth*
' of it, with their *Estates*, *Liberties*, and
' *Lives*.

' Thus did *Jesus Christ*, as was foretold
' by *Isaiah*, ch. 50. 5. where Christ saith by
' his Spirit, *The Lord hath opened mine Ear*,
' and *I was not rebellious, neither turned away*
' *back ; I gave my Back to the Smilers, and*
' *my Cheeks to them who pluck'd off the Hair ;*
' *I hid not my Face from Shame and Spitting.*
' And in the Days of his *Flesh*, how willing-
' ly did he seal to the Truth of his *New Tes-*
' *tament Doctrine* with his *Suffering*, and suf-
' fered himself to be *apprehended* by the Hands
' of Men, and to be *crucified*, when he could
' have commanded *Legions of Angels* for his
' Succour, if he had pleased, and would not
' have made use of his own *infinite*, and al-
' mighty Power.

' And this *Submission* and *Willingness* to
' suffer for the Truth, *Christ* hath commanded
' all

' all his Disciples ; saying, *He that will save*
 ' *his Life shall lose it ; and he that will lose his*
 ' *Life for my sake shall save it : And if any*
 ' *Man will be my Disciple, let him deny him-*
 ' *self, and take up the Cross, and follow me :*
 ' And again, *I send you forth as Sheep among*
 ' *Wolves, and ye shall be brought before Kings*
 ' *and Rulers for my Name's sake ; that is, for*
 ' the true, and spiritual Teaching of the
 ' Gospel.

' Now as nothing will procure us more
 ' Enmity, than the *spiritual* Holding forth of
 ' the Gospel ; which will cause the *worldly*
 ' Church to cast out our Name as evil ; and
 ' to cast our Persons out of their Synagogues,
 ' yea, and also to kill us, when they can get
 ' Power ; so if we be *true Teachers*, must we
 ' be ready, and willing to *suffer* all this for
 ' Christ's Name sake.

' Wherefore *those Teachers*, who embrace
 ' the *Heighth* and *Honour* of this *Life*, and
 ' will not own the Gospel of Christ, *farther*
 ' than they may thereby procure to them-
 ' selves *Credit, Reputation, Profit, and Pre-*
 ' *ferment* in the World ; and to this End, in
 ' *doubtful* and *difficult* Times carry themselves
 ' so *subtilly*, that whatever Party shall pre-
 ' vail, they may still stand on their *Legs*,
 ' and enjoy their present Prosperity and Pre-
 ' ferment ; and so are neither *hot*, nor *cold* ;
 ' neither truly *for* the Truth, nor openly *a-*
 ' *gainst* it ; but seek by all subtil Means to
 ' decline the Cross of Christ. And tho' in
 ' Christ

• Christ *himself* they *praise* his Meanness,
 • Plainness, Simplicity, Suffering, and Cross,
 • yet they are *delicate*, and cannot endure
 • these Things for Christ's sake in *Themselves*,
 • but bend and frame the whole Course of
 • their *Ministry* so, as they may *obtain* all
 • good Things from the World, and *avoid* and
 • escape all evil Things from it ; these *all* are
 • *false Prophets*, and *Ministers of Antichrist*.

• By these *nine* Signs (for I shall name no
 • more now) may the *true Prophets*, and *Mi-*
 • *nisters of Christ* be manifestly distinguished,
 • and discerned from the *false* Ones of *Anti-*
 • *christ*, by all the *true People* of God, who
 • have received his *Spirit*.

• Now let God and his *Word* be *true*, and
 • every Man a *Liar*.

This last, Sir, is the closing Sign ; and I
 pray God, both for *Religion* and the *Clergy's*
 sake, a Time of Trial may never come: For
 if the *True Teachers* do not only teach the
Word, but upon Occasion would seal to the
 Truth of it with their *Estates*, *Liberties*, and
Lives ; I much fear, by their present Manner
 of Living and Conduct, the Defection of a
 far greater Part of your Brethren.

To teach the People to *take up the Cross*
 of Christ, and to *endure Sufferings* for his
Name-sake ; is a Doctrine they can very well
 handle in the Pulpit ; but a most severe, and
 displeasing Doctrine to an Earthly-minded,
 and Pleasure-taking Clergy. No, no: The
 Vicar of *Bray* is a noted Instance of Priestly

Cunning and Inconstancy; who was first a *Papist*, then a *Protestant*; and after that a *Papist*, and then again a *Protestant*; and being charg'd by One for a *Turn-Coat*, reply'd *I am no Turn-Coat, for I resolve to live and dye Vicar of Bray.*

This brings to my Mind a Saying of that young, pious Divine Mr. *Whitefield*, in one of his *Field-Sermons*; That the *Clergy's Subscribing to the Articles of the Church of England was the Key to Ecclesiastical Preferments; and when they had got them, they then put the Key in their Pockets.*

A Practice of this Kind we have very wittily describ'd by *Hudibras*; viz.

*He that swears against his Will,
Holds his own Opinion still :
'Tis pity Oaths should be so brittle,
That will not bow, and bend a little.
He that imposes the Oath breaks it,
Not he that for Convenience takes it :
For how can any Man be said
To break an Oath he never made.*

You see, Sir, the Conduct of many of your Brethren has not only been taken Notice of by Mr. *Whitefield* lately; but it has been a Subject of Observation for many Years, and many good Divines and Others have complain'd

plain'd against it ; and as they have had Opportunity, have sharply reprov'd it.

Min. *I perceive, Mr. Methodist, notwithstanding all the Respect, You say, You have to those of the Clergy, whom You think orthodox ; it will not influence You so far to spare the rest, as to forbear satyrizing upon them : For whatever Author You can find out, either in Prose or Verse, so he has but something against the Clergy, You catch hold of him ; and bring him in by the Head and Shoulders. But were all the Reports, which are spread Abroad against the Clergy collected together in a Volume, it would appear, that they have suffer'd much Persecution from slandering Tongues. And I see no Reason, why the Clergy of our Church, in a Time of Trial, should not be as constant, and couragious in maintaining the Principles of our Holy Religion, as Others who make a much greater Noise about it. And I doubt not, there are at this Time, amongst our Order, Those, when the Cause of God, and the Vindication of his Truth shall require it, who can willingly, and chearfully relinquish their Estates, Liberties, and Lives, on their Behalf.*

Meth. I hope there are ; and God forbid I should think otherwise. But those I here intend, are the carnal and worldly Sort ; who take much more Care to add Living to Living, than of gaining Souls to God, and Seals to their Ministry. But as my Author has more pathetically address'd himself both to Ministers and People, I shall quote him in his own Words as follow.

‘ And now I shall make but *two Uses* of this
 ‘ briefly, and so conclude for this Time. And
 ‘ the *first* shall be to Those of You who are
 ‘ *spiritual Christians* ; and the *second* to the
 ‘ *carnal Clergy*.

‘ *First*, You who are *True Believers* and
 ‘ *Spiritual Christians*, may judge aright, by
 ‘ what You have heard, of the *present Clergy*,
 ‘ or *Common Ministry* of the *Nation* ; and may
 ‘ see by the *clear Light* of the Word, that
 ‘ they, for the *Generality* of them, are not
 ‘ *true* but *false Prophets* ; not the Ministers
 ‘ of *Christ* but of *Antichrist* ; not sent of *God*,
 ‘ nor anointed by his *Spirit*, but ordained
 ‘ and appointed by *Men*, at their own *Desire*
 ‘ and *Seeking*, for worldly Advantage-sake ;
 ‘ Men who *stand* and *minister* in the Church,
 ‘ only in the Strength of their *Academical*
 ‘ *Degrees* and *Ecclesiastical Ordination* ; but do
 ‘ not stand and feed the People in the *Strength*
 ‘ of the *Lord*, and in the *Majesty of the Name*
 ‘ of their *God*. And this *corrupt Ministry*,
 ‘ and *carnal Clergy* have deceived the People
 ‘ and Nations, with a *corrupt* and *carnal Un-*
 ‘ *derstanding* of *Christ*, and of the *Scriptures*,
 ‘ and of the *Kingdom of Christ*, and of the
 ‘ *Government* of his *Kingdom* ; and of all
 ‘ the *Things of Christ* : Yea, they have un-
 ‘ der the *Name* and *Pretence* of *Christ*, set
 ‘ up a Church to *Antichrist* every where ;
 ‘ and do continually mislead *Thousands* of
 ‘ poor Souls, and carry them captive to *Hell*,
 ‘ and that under the *Colour* and *Pretence* of
 ‘ Religion.

‘ And

' And this, I say, is the *great Evil* in these
 ' *false Teachers*, that under the *Name* of
 ' Christ they *fight* against Christ ; and under
 ' the *Name* of the *Word* they *fight* against
 ' the *Word* ; and under the *Name* of the
 ' *Church* they *fight* against the *Church* : And
 ' this is a *grievous Abomination of Desolation*
 ' in the *Temple* of God ; that they who
 ' should be the *Chief* for the *Truth*, are the
 ' *Chief* against it ; and that they who should
 ' be *faithful Witnesses* to the holy *Truth* of
 ' Christ, should prove *lying Witnesses* against
 ' it. If a *profane Person*, or *Heathen* should
 ' do this, it would be *Wickedness* and *Im-*
 ' *piety* ; but this is *horrible Abomination*, and
 ' *Antichristianism* in the *Church* of Christ ;
 ' that they, who are come into it as *Friends*,
 ' and have obtained the *chief* Places in it,
 ' should yet under this *Vizard*, be indeed
 ' very *Enemies*, and *Seducers*, and *Hinderers*
 ' of the *Word* of Christ crucified. Where-
 ' fore saith the *Truth* against such, *Psal.* 55.
 ' 12. &c. *It was not an Enemy that reproached*
 ' *me, then I could have born it ; neither was*
 ' *it he that hated me, that magnified himself*
 ' *against me, for then I would have hid myself*
 ' *from him ; but it was thou, a Man, mine*
 ' *Equal, my Guide, and my Acquaintance ;*
 ' *we took sweet Counsel together, and walked*
 ' *unto the House of God in Company, &c.*

' And so these *false Teachers* are these *fa-*
 ' *miliar Enemies*, and exercise all their *Ha-*
 ' *tred* under the *Pretence* of *Love* ; and all
 ' their

' their *Enmity* under Pretence of *Friendship* ;
 ' and practise their *Wickedness* under a *Form*
 ' of *Godliness* ; and by this *Subtilty* have they
 ' deceived the World. They will not plainly
 ' contradict the Words of the *Prophets*, *Apos-*
 ' *tles*, and *Christ*, in the *Letter* of it, but will
 ' praise it, and speak well of it ; but yet they
 ' are utter *Enemies* to the true and *spiritual*
 ' Meaning of it, both in their *Lives* and *Doc-*
 ' *trine* : And the more these Men make a Show
 ' of *Religion* and *Holiness*, the greater *Anti-*
 ' *christ*s they be in the Church.

' Wherefore to You who are true *Christians*,
 ' and have received an *Anointing* from God,
 ' this is the Word and Charge of God : Come
 ' out from among them my People, and touch
 ' not the unclean Thing ; that is, their carnal
 ' *Doctrine* ; have nothing to do with such
 ' *Prophets* and *Ministers*, but remember what
 ' Christ saith, *John* 10. That His Sheep bear
 ' his Voice, and will not bear the Voice of
 ' Strangers ; for they know the Voice of Stran-
 ' gers. And if any of You live in any Town
 ' or Parish where such false *Prophets* are, tho'
 ' they go under the Name of godly and ortho-
 ' dox, yet touch not the unclean Thing ; but
 ' know, that it is better for You Believers to
 ' assemble together among yourselves, tho' You
 ' be but few, than to communicate with the
 ' false *Prophets* in their false *Ordinances* ; see-
 ' ing Christ has promised his *Presence* to his
 ' Believers, even where but two or three meet
 ' together in his Name : Yea, he hath said,
 ' If

' If any two of you shall agree together to ask
 ' any thing on Earth, it shall be done of my Fa-
 ' ther which is in Heaven. And if You, having
 ' these Promises, shall meet together among
 ' yourselves in the Name, and Spirit of Christ,
 ' in the Use of the Word and Prayer of Faith,
 ' Lo! Christ himself will be with you; and
 ' tho' You be but few, yet are You the Church
 ' of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of
 ' Truth; and of that very Church, against
 ' which the Gates of Hell shall not prevail :
 ' And thus much to You spiritual Christians.

' Secondly, And now for the carnal Clergy,
 ' or false Prophets; their Burden is this, from
 ' the Lord. You have run when You were
 ' not sent; You have said Thus saith the Lord,
 ' when the Lord hath not spoken by You;
 ' You have grieved the Hearts of the Faith-
 ' ful, and strengthened the Hands of the Wic-
 ' ked; You have been forward to advance the
 ' Form of Godliness, whilst You have been bit-
 ' ter Enemies to the Power of it; You have
 ' deceived the Nations, and made them drunk
 ' with the Cup of the Wine of your Fornica-
 ' tions; You have done more against Christ
 ' and his true Church, and more for Anti-
 ' christ and his false Church, than all the Peo-
 ' ple in these Nations besides. Wherefore
 ' this is the Word of the Lord to You, through-
 ' out all your Quarters, That the Nations
 ' shall not much longer be deceived by You,
 ' nor buy any more of your Merchandize;
 ' for your Wine is the Poison of Dragons, and
 ' the

the *cruel Venom* of *Asps*; your *Doctrine* being the Word of *Philosophy*, and not of *Faith*; after the Mind of *Man*, but contrary to the Mind of *Christ*; to set up *Your-selves* and your own *Interest*, to the *Prejudice* of *Christ's Word* and *People*. Wherefore how much You have *glorified* yourselves, and lived *deliciously* by this Trade, of making *Merchandize of the Word of God*, so much *Torment* and *Sorrow* shall God give You; and your *Plagues* shall come upon You in a Day, and your *Judgment* in an Hour; and your *Lovers* shall not be able to *help* You, nor the *Petitioners* for You to *uphold* You; but God shall bring You down *wonderfully*, by the clear Light of his *Word*, and his mighty and irresistible *Providence* accompanying it; and the *World* shall tremble, and wonder at the Noise of your *Downfall*; and the *Heavens*, and holy *Apostles*, and *Prophets* shall rejoice over You, when God shall *avenge* their Cause upon You. And the *Lord* will save his *Flock*, and they will no more be a *Prey* to You; neither shall You any more serve *Yourselves* of *them*. And he will set up *one Shepherd* over them, even *Jesus Christ*; and he shall feed them, and be their *Shepherd*. And till these Things be *fully* brought to pass, You shall be cloathed with *Trembling*, when You shall perceive the *Lord* is risen up to *perform* all these Things, according to his *Word*.

And

‘ And now for *Conclusion*, If any of You;
 ‘ or *most* of You, or *all* of You, are offended
 ‘ at these Things ; in such Sort, that You
 ‘ cannot contain Yourselfs from *Anger* and
 ‘ *bitter Zeal* ; I do intreat You to consider
 ‘ seriously, how much *better*, and more *pro-*
 ‘ *fitable* to your *eternal Salvation* it would be,
 ‘ for You to *resist* and *refrain* from such *evil*
 ‘ and *unchristian* Passions ; and that You
 ‘ would rather (if there be any Hope) re-
 ‘ turn to your own *Hearts*, and try your
 ‘ *Works* ; and *repent* before our *holy* and *right-*
 ‘ *eous Lord* ; and return *truly* and *speedily* to
 ‘ *Christ* from *Antichrist* ; lest You be inwrap-
 ‘ ped both in his *temporal* and *eternal* De-
 ‘ struction.

‘ And thus much was delivered to the *Uni-*
 ‘ *versity Congregation* in *Cambridge*, for a *Tes-*
 ‘ *timony* against them ; except they repent : ---

Now Sir, You have heard the *Nine Signs*
 my Author gives, to distinguish between a
True, and *False Prophet*, or *Preacher* ; and
 to whom he addresses his *Application*. From
 what Motive, think You, but an ardent Zeal
 for the *Honour of God*, and the *Salvation of*
Souls, cou’d this good Divine thus readily be
 induc’d, not only to forego all wordly Ad-
 vantage and Preferment ; but to expose him-
 self to the Anger, Ill-will, and Contempt of
 of his Brethren ; who, however industrious
 in preaching up *Charity* and *Forgiveness* to
 Others, are themselves the most backward,

H

and

and difficult to be reconciled to those, who have offended them.

Upon the whole of the Matter, I find, that this Author's Preaching *Christ alone*, and *Him crucified* in his Day, as well as Mr. *Whitefield's* in our Days, was really a *Stone of Stumbling*, and a *Rock of Offence* to many of the Clergy; among whom I fear (as Bp *Burnet* before observes) the Knowledge of the best Things are too much wanting. Be that as it will, I believe, since the Time of the *Reformation*, never did Men, at such a Distance, set out with Desires and Designs so concentrick; nor were ever Men, for their Works sake, more loaded with Calumnies and Reproaches, than were Mr. *Dell* and Mr. *Whitefield*; for which, as I hope, the One has, so the Other will obtain *great Rewards in Heaven*. And as the former has written an Apology for himself; so in some Sense may the last Part of it be applicable to the latter; which I shall here insert as follows.

' And last of all, (*says he* *) If any say,
' *I myself relate to the University, why then*
' *do I speak against them?*

' *I answer, That I neither do, nor will re-*
' *late to the University; as it is polluted with*
' *any of the Abominations herein mentioned:*
' *But as by the Providence of God alone, I*
' *have been brought to that Relation in which*

* Mr. *Dell's* Apology to the Reader, touching his Reply to Mr. *Sydrach Simpson's* Sermon.

‘ I now stand, and continue in it, against the
 ‘ wills and workings of many ; so through
 ‘ his good Pleasure I will remnin, till he shall
 ‘ otherwise dispose of me: And during my
 ‘ sojourning with them, I will not fail to te-
 ‘ stify against their Evil ; and to endeavour
 ‘ to win all those whom God shall persuade
 ‘ to receive his Truth, from Heathenism to
 ‘ the Gospel, and from Antichrist to Christ.

‘ Wherefore let none be offended that I am
 ‘ made willing to hazard, and part with my
 ‘ wordly Accommodations for Christ’s Name-
 ‘ sake ; but let them rather praise the Grace
 ‘ of God, which hath enabled me to witness
 ‘ a good Confession ; whatever wordly Disad-
 ‘ vantage I might run into thereby. Where-
 ‘ fore welcome the Kingdom, Righteousness,
 ‘ Power, Wisdom, Word of Christ, tho’ they
 ‘ swallow up all my earthly Accommodations:
 ‘ For such Love hath the Lord put into my
 ‘ Heart, that I would not willingly conceal
 ‘ any Thing of his most precious Truth, ei-
 ‘ ther to gain or to preserve to myself the
 ‘ whole World. And so righteous Father, not
 ‘ my Will be done, nor theirs ; but Thy Will
 ‘ be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.

Thus much for this Excellent Divine Mr.
 William Dell, of whom there is no Room to
 think, that he was a discontented Clergyman
 for Want of Preferment. His Discourses are
 plain, and free from the Vanity of human
 Oratory ; but carry in them the utmost Sin-
 cerity, and an ardent Zeal for the Truths of

the Gospel of Christ, and the Salvation of Souls ; and as a faithful Servant, and Minister of his Dear Lord, he regarded neither the Fear nor Favour of Men, but preach'd *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, whether pleasing, or displeasing to the Ears of them to whom he deliver'd it.

Min. *I perceive Mr. Methodist, You lay a great Stress on the Doctrines of this your Favourite Mr. Dell ; inasmuch as You observe he was One of our Order, and his Sentiments seem to come nearer to Those of our First Reformers, than the Generality of the Clergy's have ever since : And indeed, I think, it is something difficult, after the many Changes of Affairs, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, to produce a Man of Note in our Church, who has firmly adhered, or does now to those Doctrines then settled by them. But as Arts and Sciences are daily improving, why may not the Study of the highest, and best Things receive Improvement likewise ? And since You do not allow of an Infallibility in any Church, or People ; pray, why must all the Doctrines of our First Reformers stand as infallibly incapable of admitting any other Sense or Meaning, than that they held themselves ; since they were settled by Men, whom, You will also allow, were not infallible ? Pray, does your Idol Whitefield's Revival of these Doctrines give them ever the better Sanction ; or render them the more infallible ? Can he, a Youth, who has not pass'd over half the Days of Man, or gone thorow the*
re-

requisite Courses of Study, be more capable of Teaching Doctrines, than those who have doubled his Years, Knowledge, and Experience? Where will You find a Man of Learning, Experience, and Piety, of any Note in our Church, who has assumed this Authority, or took the Liberty of finding Fault with his Spiritual Fathers and Brethren, as your Beloved Whitefield has done?

Meth. Sir, Your Arguing that the Doctrines of our *First Reformers* were those of fallible Men, is a stronger Argument for the *Dissenters*, who plead against the *Rites and Ceremonies* of the Church of *England*; yet neither You, nor your Brethren, in Compassion to *tender, and scrupulous Consciences*, will admit the Alteration of a Tittle; but do *infallibly* maintain the *Ceremonies*, and sit very loose to the Doctrines. For a Proof of this, since You push me on to produce Men of Learning, Experience, and real Piety, in the Church, who have so done; I think myself oblig'd to answer your Challenge.

But before I proceed, give me Leave to premise one Thing in Favour of Mr. *Whitefield* before I enter the List, and which may, in some measure, serve to vindicate him from the Character You charge him with; *viz.*
 ' That I being one Day to give him a Visit,
 ' he had just then receiv'd a Letter out of
 ' *Lincolnshire*, which he read to me, and
 ' Others then present: The Import of it was
 ' to entreat him for God's sake to come over,
 ' and

‘ and help them ; for their Clergy fed them
 ‘ with Husks, and not with the Bread of
 ‘ Life; and that they were so lazy, that they
 ‘ car’d not how little they did in promoting
 ‘ the Good of their Souls.” What do You
 think of this ? Who were in the right here,
 the Priests, or the People ? They who took
 Care of, and neglected Souls; or they, who
 call’d to One for Help, whom they believ’d
 was sincere in his Desires, and earnest in his
 Endeavours for the Salvation of them. By this
 You may see, that the wicked Lives, and sad
 Conduct of many of your Brethren, has been
 Matter of Complaint for a long Season ; and
 now and then, a serious, and godly Clergy-
 man has, from the Zeal of his Heart, taken
 upon him to reprove them ; but then, Sir,
 as nothing is more ungrateful, so nothing is
 more common, than that they have had in
 Return many vile Reflections, and scandalous
 Reproaches.

But to return, To support the Testimony
 of Mr. *Dell*, I shall subjoin that of a Godly,
 Learned, and Judicious Divine, Dr. *John Ed-
 wards*, of the University of *Cambridge*, who
 liv’d, and dy’d a worthy Member of the
 Church of *England* ; whose Zeal for the Glo-
 ry of God, and Affection to his Reverend Bre-
 thren ; the Honour of the Ministry, and Love
 to Souls, excited him to compose those Va-
 luable Volumes of his, Intitl’d *The Preacher* :
 Where in speaking of the *Offices and Accom-
 plishments of a Preacher*, he thus expresses
 him.-

himself : ‘ * Now,----- if they, (meaning
 ‘ the *Pagans*) would not allow any Man the
 ‘ Title of an *Orator*, unless he were Good as
 ‘ well as Eloquent ; certainly, it must be the
 ‘ inseparable Character of the *Christian Ora-*
 ‘ *tor*, the Preacher of God’s Word, that he
 ‘ be a very Good and Righteous Man ; that
 ‘ he excels in Vertue and Piety. It is expected
 ‘ of him, that he charges all the Divine
 ‘ Truths he delivers, on his own Conscience ;
 ‘ that he bid the People do nothing but what
 ‘ he will do himself. Happy is it when he
 ‘ can say to them as St. *Paul* to his *Philip-*
 ‘ *pians*, *Those Things which you have heard,*
 ‘ *and seen in me, do.* Phil. 4. 9. He must
 ‘ first set himself before them as a Pattern,
 ‘ and then call upon them to imitate him.
 ‘ More especially ’tis required of him, that
 ‘ he not guilty of any open, and scandalous
 ‘ Sins. And *First*, not of *Avarice*. It was
 ‘ to the Discredit of *Seneca*, that famous Mo-
 ‘ ralift, that he did not leave off to practice
 ‘ Usury, tho’ he wrote against Covetousness,
 ‘ and discoursed so bravely against the Love
 ‘ of the World. It is much more to the Dis-
 ‘ paragement of some among us, that preach
 ‘ against worldly Mindedness (when that, as
 ‘ well as other Matters, come in their Way)
 ‘ and yet openly practise it. They truck for
 ‘ Livings, and enter into them by Simony
 ‘ and Perjury. They are greedy of Prefer-

• Dr. Edward’s Preacher. Part I. p. 310, &c.

‘ ment,

' ment, and use base Arts to compass it; for
 ' they purchase their Dignities with the Sale
 ' Honesty, Truth, Shame, Conscience, and
 ' Heaven itself. They make a Trade of Di-
 ' vinity, merely to fill their Purfes, as if the
 ' Clergy were only for *Heritage* and *Patri-*
 ' *mony*, as their Name signifies. These Men
 ' do any Thing to be rich, and damn their
 ' Souls to keep their Bodies and Estates. These
 ' *Judasses* betray Religion for Money, and
 ' prefer the *Pieces of Silver* to Christ himself.
 ' And as they get, so they hold their Benefi-
 ' ces, they neglect feeding their Flock, and
 ' so betray the Souls of others as well as their
 ' own. Any Study and Employment are ac-
 ' ceptable to them, but that which they so-
 ' lemnly engaged to follow; any Work but
 ' Preaching and taking Care of Mens Souls.
 ' *Law* or *Physick* is taken up by some; and
 ' some are *Farmers*, and others are *Traders*
 ' and *Merchandizers*; and some refuse no
 ' Employment that will bring in the Pence.
 ' These are *Secular Priests* indeed, they con-
 ' verse wholly with this World, and immerse
 ' their Souls into Earth, whilst they pretend
 ' to be concerned for Heaven.

' But this is absolutely repugnant to the
 ' Laws of Christ, and the Design of their Sa-
 ' cred Function, and the Example and Com-
 ' mands of the Apostles. *I seek not yours,*
 ' *but you*; saith the great Pattern of the Cler-
 ' gy. 2 Cor. 12. 14. *Feed the Flock of God*
 ' *which is among you, taking the Oversight*
 ' *there-*

thereof, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready
 mind; 1 Pet. 5. 2. out of a free and gene-
 rous Disposition to advance the Cause of
 Christ, and to promote the Salvation of
 Souls. Timothy was forbid to entangle him-
 self with the Affairs of this Life. 2 Tim.
 2. 3. And hence it was that in Ecclesiasti-
 cal Council and Synods of Old, the Church-
 men were under a strict Prohibition of in-
 termeddling in worldly, and merely civil
 Matters. According to our own * Muni-
 cipal Laws a Minister must not be a Far-
 mer, a Dealer in Corn, Cattle, or any o-
 ther Commodities, but only for his own Use
 and Provision. And the Constitutions and
 Canons of our Church run thus, † A Mini-
 ster shall not give himself to any base or ser-
 vile Labour. Again, ‖ No Deacon or Priest
 may voluntarily relinquish his Calling, and
 use himself in the Course of his Life as a Lay-
 man, upon Pain of Excommunication. And
 in the Exhortation to those that are to be
 ordained Priests in our Church this is inserted,
 You ought to forsake and set aside (as much
 as in you may) all worldly Care and Studies.
 And every Priest promises at that Time that
 he will lay aside the Study of the World and
 the Flesh.

Now it is very Reasonable it should be
 thus, because first, Clergymen are spiritual
 Persons, and separated from the World by

* 21 Hen. 8.

† Can. 75.

‖ Can. 76.

‘ Virtue of their Calling. On which Account
 ‘ they ought to be Strangers to the World ;
 ‘ and a Love of Riches, and a greedy Desire
 ‘ of Gain ought to be looked upon as prodi-
 ‘ gious and monstrous in Persons of their Cha-
 ‘ racter. Why do they distinguish themselves
 ‘ from the *Laity* by a peculiar Title, if they
 ‘ pursue the World, and concern themselves
 ‘ in secular Employments, and spend their
 ‘ Time in them ? —

‘ *Secondly*, Affairs that are proper for *Lay-*
 ‘ *men*, are not fit for the *Clergy*, and espe-
 ‘ cially for the Preachers of the Gospel ; be-
 ‘ cause these are great Hindrances to them in
 ‘ discharging their Office. *None that is soli-*
 ‘ *citous and anxious teaches well*, is a Saying
 ‘ of the *Hebrew* Masters ; and contains very
 ‘ weighty Truth in it. Those that distract
 ‘ their Minds with the Affairs and Cares of
 ‘ the World, are the least capable of all Men
 ‘ to instruct Mankind, to inform them of
 ‘ their Duty, to let them know what is their
 ‘ chief Concern, and to lead them to the
 ‘ Chiefest Good. Can those Persons teach
 ‘ other Men to despise the World, and to
 ‘ have an Eye to a better and future State,
 ‘ who are sunk into the World themselves.

‘ *Thirdly*, This makes them contemptible,
 ‘ instead of being honoured. For * it is a
 ‘ Sign of a vile and base Mind to love Riches,

* Nihil est tam angusti tamq; parvi animi quàm amare divi-
 tias. Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.

' and gape after worldly Gain ; whereas on
 ' the contrary, it hath ever been the Badge
 ' of Great and Noble Souls, that they have
 ' not been given to this Vice ; a Vice that hath
 ' been universally decried by all Men of wor-
 ' thy and generous Spirits. But especially
 ' nothing makes a Conductor to Heaven so
 ' vile as Avarice : And therefore he, of all
 ' Persons, should be careful to avoid it. * An
 ' Embassador, especially of Christ, should not
 ' be intent upon his worldly Interest. The
 ' Tables of *Money-Changers* are no Ornament
 ' of the *Temple*, the Buyers and Sellers are to
 ' have no Place here. We must convince
 ' Men, that the *Ministry* is such a Work as
 ' is not to be chosen for secular Ends and Ad-
 ' vantages. This we cannot better do than
 ' by our Practice, that is, by devoting our-
 ' selves to that spiritual Work, and wholly
 ' employing our Time and Pains in it ; and
 ' by despising the World, and letting this
 ' Globe of Earth touch us *in puncto* only."

Now Sir, what think You of Dr. *Edwards*?
 I am apt to think he has touch'd many of
 your Brethren in the right Place. Our blef-
 sed Lord, no Doubt, foreknew the sad Effects
 of Covetousness ; or he had not said to his Dis-
 ciples and Followers, *Luke 12. 15. Take heed,*
and beware of Covetousness, for a Man's Life
consisteth not in the abundance of the Things which
he possesseth. And the Apostle *Paul* very likely

* Rei suæ ergo né quis Legatus esto. Cic. de Leg. lib. 3.

saw in his Time, the dismal Effects of it; or otherwise he would not so often have warned against it. And that this a reigning Vice at this Day among many of the Clergy, I grieve to think upon, even from what I have occasionally heard from some among You.

Min. *Our Pride, and Covetousness have been the standing Subjects of Railery: Who are more ridicul'd and censur'd than the Clergy; if at a Time we insist upon our Dues, or deny a Request, we are presently censur'd for proud, and covetous Parsons; tho' at the same Time they know neither our Wants, nor our private Charities. And this, no Doubt, Dr. Edwards was sensible of, notwithstanding what he has here said of the Clergy.*

Meth. Well Sir, I will partly admit what You say to be true; but yet I can by no sensible Argument be induc'd to think those sincere, and godly Christian Ministers, who engross several *Living*s, and neither *do*, nor *can* *reside* at them. And that which the more confirms me in this Opinion is, what this Excellent, and Learned Divine says on these Subjects; and that in his own Words as follow:

' Under this Head (meaning *Avarice* says he, *Preacher*, p. 315.) I may pertinently say
' something of *Pluralities* and *Non-Residence*,
' which are the Effects of this Vice I have
' been speaking of, and are the Source of
' many Vices and Miscarriages. The hold-
' ing of more Ecclesiastical Preferments than
' one, hath been censured, and disallowed not
' only

* only by the *Imperial Laws*, and by our own,
 * but (which One would think should pre-
 * vail more with Churchmen) by the *Decrees*
 * of the *Church*, and by the Determinations
 * of *Fathers, Casuists, and Profess'd Divines*.
 * The first General Council of *Calcedon* con-
 * demns this Practice under the Penalty of be-
 * ing degraded; and several Ecclesiastical Ca-
 * nons have struck at it since. I cannot but
 * take Notice of one more especially, namely
 * that of the Council of *Mentz*, which met
 * in the Year 1549. * *It is plain and evi-*
 * *dent (say they) that one Man's holding of*
 * *many Benefices, is a very mischievous Thing*
 * *to the Churches, because one Man can't duly*
 * *perform the Offices which are required in se-*
 * *veral Churches, and take that Care of their*
 * *Concerns which is necessary.* Notwithstand-
 * ing this, there are that plead for a Plura-
 * lity, and are for engrossing as many Livings
 * and Dignities as they can come at. We com-
 * plain of King *Henry the VIIIth* for spoiling
 * the Church of her Revenues, and we rob it
 * ourselves. We plead for the *Jus divinum*
 * of Tithes, and will not let the Church be
 * wrong'd by the Laity, but we make no Con-
 * science of doing it ourselves; and we care
 * not how we injure others, so we enrich our-
 * selves. We that talk so high for the Main-

* *Res ipsa loquitur, plura beneficia non sine gravi Ecclesia-*
rum damno ab uno obtineri, cum unus in pluribus Ecclesiis
rite officia persolvere, aut rebus earum necessarium curam im-
pendere nequeat.

* *tenance*

' *tenance* of Ministers, take it away from them
 ' with our own Hands, whilst we allow our
 ' Curates so mean a Share in the Ecclesiasti-
 ' cal Incomes, and so poorly recompense them
 ' for their Academick Education. It is in
 ' our Church, as in that of *Corinth* (tho' in
 ' a different Sense) *One is Hungry, and ano-*
 ' *ther is Drunken*; whilst one starves, ano-
 ' ther is gluttoned. Some are dandled on the
 ' Knee, and wax fat; others are thrust out
 ' of Doors, and fed with the Bread of Af-
 ' fliction. Not that I am for a *Gavel-kind*
 ' among the Sons of the Church, as if all
 ' must needs share alike; for some are wor-
 ' thy of *double Honour*. But I am for a more
 ' just and equal Distribution of the Revenues
 ' of the Church, and I would have those who
 ' hunt after more Preferment, when they
 ' have enough, be taught to keep within due
 ' Bounds, to restrain their greedy Appetite
 ' and insatiable Boulimie. If those are bla-
 ' med who *laid Field to Field, and joined*
 ' *House to House*, are not they as blamable
 ' who lay Church to Church, and Parish to
 ' Parish, those Daughters of the Horseleech
 ' that cry, *Give, Give*; and like Hell and
 ' the Grave are never satisfy'd?

' *Pluralities* are attended with *Non Resi-*
 ' *dence*, and therefore I will speak of this
 ' next. It is true, the Apostles were Itine-
 ' rant Preachers, it being necessary for the
 ' first founding and spreading the Gospel; but
 ' that is not our Province, we being confined

to

' to a particular Flock. The Apostles Work
 ' was to go Abroad, and ours is to stay at
 ' Home. None of us is to take such a Cir-
 ' cuit as St. *Paul* did, who tells us that *from*
 ' *Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum,*
 ' that is, all the Countries that lye between
 ' *Jerusalem* and *Dalmatia*, which are above
 ' a Thousand Miles in Length, besides the ad-
 ' jacent Provinces, *he had fully preached the*
 ' *Gospel of Christ*, Rom. 15. 19. The Case
 ' is otherwise with the Ministers of the Gos-
 ' pel at this Day, they have particular Con-
 ' gations to look after near at Hand, and
 ' they must abide with them. They must
 ' *wait on the Altar*, 1 Cor. 9. 13. where
 ' the Original Word signifies *residing*; and
 ' is urged by no meaner Persons than *Chry-*
 ' *ostom*, and his great Imitator *Theophylact*,
 ' to the Purpose I am now speaking of;
 ' to wit, that the Ministers of God's Word
 ' should not be absent from their Flocks, but
 ' with constant Care attend upon them. The
 ' *Residence* of Bishops and Pastors was thought
 ' necessary by the Ancient (*) *Fathers* of the
 ' *Christian Church*, and by several (†) *Coun-*
 ' *cils*, and by the Compiler of the (‡) *Canons*
 ' *of the Apostles*. And the learned Bp of (||) *Sa-*

* Athanas. Tom. 2. Augustin. Epist. 138. De Civ. Dei,
 l. 19. c. 19. Synes. Epist. 67.

† Concil. Nic. 1. Can. 15, 16. Conc. Constantinop. 8.
 c. 24. Conc. Chalced. c. 13. Conc. Antioch. c. 17. Conc.
 Sardic. c. 14. Conc. Lateran. A. D. 1215.

‡ Can. 80.

|| Pastoral Care Chap. 5.

rum observes, that the Canons of Councils,
 even in the worst Ages, condemned *Non-
 Residence* and *Pluralities*. Let them who
 talk for the Observing of the *Canons*, mind
 this. If they pretend to be *Canonical* in o-
 ther Things, let them listen to the *Canons*
 in this. Yea, let them remember, that it
 was carried by the better Part of the Coun-
 cil of *Trent*, that *Residence* was of *Divine
 Right*; and that *The Pope had no Power to
 dispense with Non-Residence*. Tho' it is true,
 the Pope blasted the Endeavours of those of
 that Council who appeared in this Cause;
 for his own Profit. Father *Paul* in his *Hi-
 story of this Council* hath suggested fundry
 excellent Things against this Usage, and
 shews that from the Beginning it was not so
 in the Church. Which I would have those,
 who have a Reverence for Antiquity con-
 sider of. Or, if the present Practice of the
 Church of *Rome*, be of any Weight, we are
 told by One that hath been among them,
 that (*) *there is no such Thing as Non-
 Residence, or Plurality, to be heard of in
 whole Countries of that Communion*; and
 that the *Clergy* are more reformed in *Papish*
 Churches, in *France* particularly, than here;
 as to the Point of *Non-Residence* as well as
 other Things.

And it is no Wonder that this Disorder
 hath been taken Notice of, and in some
 measure redress'd, seeing the Effects and

Consequences of it are so dismal and dreadful. For hence unavoidably follow the despising of the Ministry, the discouraging of Learning, the upholding of Idleness, the neglect of Mens Souls, the Ignorance and Irreligion of the People; and in short, a Scandal to the Church and Religion, and a Wound to Mens Consciences. Whence the Learned (*) Bishop *Stillingfleet* concludes, that in *Point of Conscience* (whatever the Laws of the Land may permit) *we are obliged to reside*. And he adds, *If it be left to a Man's Conscience, whether a Man answers his Obligation more by Personal Attendance, or by a Curate ; whether the Honour of Religion and the Good of Souls be more promoted, and the Peace of his own Mind secured by one or the other, it is no hard matter to judge on which Side it must go*. The Sum of this great Man's Words is this, that if Ministers will be *Conscientious*, they must *reside*. And as for the Work they are to do, if they can perform it by being at a great Distance from their Flock, nay, by not coming at them, they can do more than the Primitive Fathers of the Church, or the most Judicious Councils, or the most Conscientious Men ever thought could be done. We may guess then at the Character of those, who never see their Benefices, nor come at their Flock, unless it be to receive

* D. and R. of the Paroch. Clergy, p. 219.

the Profits. These leave their Charge, as *the Ostrich her Eggs*, are not concerned what becomes of them. They satisfy themselves that they preach by Proxy, and do their Work by Journey-men.

Next, not only *Avarice*, and Hunting after Wealth and Lucre, but *Ambition* and *Pride*, and *affecting Superiority* over one another, are unbecoming the Character of the Clergy. * *Origen* will tell us, that *He that is called to the Office of a Bishop, is not called to Principality, but to the Service of the Church*. It agrees not with those that profess themselves to be in a more peculiar manner the Servants and Subjects of him, *whose Kingdom is not of this World* to seek after Worldly Titles, Pomp, and Greatness. Our own Chronicles will acquaint us, that this hath been the inseparable Fault of the Aspiring Churchmen; and the Great Evils and Mischiefs which followed thereupon are related at the same Time. We of this Age shall feel the same, if our Pastors be not induced with a Spirit of Humility and Condescension, *not being as Lords over God's Heritage, but being Ensamples to the Flock*. *Luther* after his Way expresses the Matter thus, † *God can sometimes endure Honour in Lawyers and Physicians; but in Divines he will no Ways suffer Ambition. or Greediness of Honour*. These Qua-

* Homil. 7. in Esa.

† Colloq. Mensal.

' lities are inconsistent with the Design, and
 ' Office of a True Churchman ; and Pride
 ' will certainly obstruct the Way to Con-
 ' version. When *Augustine* the Monk came
 ' over to preach the Christian Faith to the
 ' *Britains*, a Synod was convened in Order
 ' to it ; but when they met there, they be-
 ' held him shining in his gay Vestments,
 ' sitting fixed on his Seat, and refusing to
 ' rise up, and to take Notice of the *Bri-*
 ' *tish* and *Saxon* Bishops and Priests ; this
 ' gave them a sufficient Taste of his vain,
 ' and haughty Spirit, and it is no Wonder
 ' that the Synod proved ineffectual. Such
 ' proud and gaudy *Ecclesiasticks* are not like
 ' to do any Good upon Mankind ; for the
 ' Function requires that they shew Humi-
 ' lity and Self-denial, and be modest in Ap-
 ' parel as well as other Things ; not pom-
 ' pous, and glittering like *Jewish High-*
 ' *Priests*, nor accouter'd like a *Heathen Arch-*
 ' *Flamen* ; not strutting in Powder'd Wigs,
 ' which vie Whiteness with the Surplice.
 ' Especially the Preacher, the Evangelical
 ' Pastor, who calls upon others to be hum-
 ' ble, and lowly minded, must be so him-
 ' self. Tho' he hath a Place assigned him
 ' in the Church higher than the People, yet
 ' he is to demean himself as humbly, and
 ' submissively as any of them.

' He is likewise to be careful not to ad-
 ' dict himself to an immoderate, and un-
 ' due

' due Use of the * Pleasures and Delights of
 ' Sense. Among the Qualifications of those
 ' that were *Publick Orators* and *Pleaders* a-
 ' mong the *Athenians*, this was one, † that
 ' He be not an *Effeminate*, or *Wanton Per-*
 ' *son*; for such an One will adulterate the
 ' Cause, and prostitute the Republick. A-
 ' mong the same People the *Hierophanta*,
 ' that is, the *Priests* used to take a Dose of
 ' Hemlock, to keep their Bodies cool and
 ' and chaste. And generally among the *Pa-*
 ' *gans* it was provided, that this Rank of
 ' Men should be Examples to others of So-
 ' briety, Continence, and Moderation. Much
 ' more then those of the Sacred Ministry of
 ' the *Gospel*, are not to indulge themselves in
 ' Impurity and Lasciviousness, or in any De-
 ' grees of Luxury and Sensuality; they are
 ' not to give Way to any Kind of Excess,
 ' and Immoderation in any Sort of Pleasures.
 ' Wherefore it is a scandalous Blot in Eccle-
 ' siastical History on the Memory of *Theo-*
 ' *phylact*, the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, that
 ' he left his Office in the Church unfinished,
 ' and ran to his Stables, when one of his
 ' Grooms came and told him, that his be-
 ' loved Mare *Phorbante* had foal'd. " Thus
 much for Dr. *Edwards*, who, You must ac-
 knowledge, was a Learned, Judicious, and

* Facile contemnitur Clericos qui sepe vocatus ad prandium
 ire non recusat numquam petentes, raro accidiamus rogati.
 Hieronym, ad Nepot. † Æschin. Orat. cont. Timarch.

truly Pious Divine; an Ornament to our holy Religion, and the Church; he was highly worthy the Honours in it, and the greatest Regard of his Brethren of it: For in all he has said, there appears no other Expressions of Warmth, than what may be said to proceed from an holy Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Good of the Souls both of Ministers and People. And,

To convince You he is not alone, I shall next offer to your Consideration, what the late Learned, and Reverend Mr. *Burkitt*, Author of the *Annotations on the New Testament*, says upon this Head in his Note on *Acts* 20. 28.

Observe (*says he*) here is a twofold Duty, and a threefold Motive to enforce this Duty: The first Duty is, *To take heed to themselves*. The Second is, *To take heed of all the Flock*. The first Part of a Minister's Duty is, *To take heed to himself*. *Committe animam diligentibus suam*; says St. Bernard. He that neglects his own Soul, will never take a faithful Care of the Souls of others. We must first look to ourselves, that our Judgments be sound, our Hearts holy, and and our Lives exemplary. *We must take heed to ourselves*, that we be fit for the Employment which we undertake. This is not a Burden for a Child's Shoulder. He that is himself a Babe in Knowledge, is altogether unfit to teach Men the Mysteries of Salvation. *Take we heed*, that our Example doth not contradict our Doctrine; that
our

' our Practice doth not give our Profession
 ' the Lye ; that we do, as well as teach ;
 ' not preach Angelical Sermons, and lead
 ' Diabolical Lives.

' *Take heed unto yourselves* ; next he adds,
 ' *And to all the Flock* : That is, with a con-
 ' stant Care, and laborious Diligence, ac-
 ' quain them with their Duty ; inform them
 ' of their Danger ; shew them where their
 ' Happiness lies ; and the Way and Means
 ' of attaining it : And in Order to this, all
 ' the Flock must be known, that it may be
 ' heeded ; and we must labour to be acquainted
 ' with the State of all our People as fully as
 ' we can. We must, as the Apostle before us
 ' did, visit our People from House to House ;
 ' that we may know their Persons, know
 ' their Inclinations, and know the Manner
 ' of their Conversation ; what Sins they are
 ' most in Danger of ; what Temptations most
 ' liable to ; and what Duties they neglect for
 ' the Matter, or Manner of them ; and give
 ' the best Encouragement, Directions, and
 ' Assurances we are able. " (*Let me here*
say) Good Lord ! what will become of the
 greatest Part of the Preachers, that whol-
 ly neglect most, if not all these Matters ? I
 pray God to fasten a Conviction on the Mind
 of every Teacher that shall read this ; and
 has neglected his Duty.

Now Sir, what have You to say of, or a-
 gainst these Two Last Divines ? They were
 both Men, of Note, Eminent for Learning
 and

and Piety : They were exempted from Your scandalous, and unjust Charge of being *Discontented for Want of Ecclesiastical Preferment*. They were contented with what they had, they neither coveted, nor hunted after more. Their chief Care, and Concern was, how to discharge their Duties to God, themselves, and their People with Faithfulness ; and set a good Example by their Lives and Doctrines : And whom neither of these could influence, they then pray'd for, and lamented. Their Piety and Concern ended not here, but were extended to their *Plurality*, and *Non-Residing Brethren*, who are covetous for the Fleece of many Flocks ; but leave them as Sheep without a Shepherd ; or committing them to the Care of such, whose Abilities and Performances are like their Wages poor indeed ; and who, if they visit from House to House, it is too often to fill their Stomachs, and refresh their Brains ; which their short Allowance will not admit of : The Care of Souls being the least of their Concerns. In the mean Time the *Plurality* and *Non-Resident* Minister is indulging himself in Ease and Idleness, in a better Living at a great Distance, or elsewhere looking out sharp for further Preferments. Thus we see how cunningly, and closely, many of the Priesthood endeavour to make *their Gain of Godliness*. But they, who know their Duty, or have strong Impressions of the Weightiness of the Care of Souls, cannot but be affected with the Carelessness, and

Ne-

Negligence of those, who take those Cares upon them, which they cannot but know, they neither can, nor will *Conscientiously* perform. *Plurality* and *Non-Residing* Care of Souls, is much of a Piece with the Promises of many *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, who promise Things on Behalf of the Child, that they neither do, nor can perform for themselves. This I mention to let You see, how light and loose some People are in Things of the greatest Moment; for while Some think they have discharg'd their Duties at the End of the *Chriftening Ceremony*; so the Others, when *Inducted*, after having given them a few Sermons, leave them with a Promise of returning to them at a proper Time; that is, when Money is ready for them, or they have other Designs to serve. Sad Reflection this to a good Man, who has his End in his Eye, and the Prospect of an Eternal World at no great Distance, where a strict Account must be given to the Judge of all the Earth, to think what the *Plurality*, and *Non-Resident Clergy* will have to say for themselves, when they cannot answer, *Lord, here am I, and the People under my Care.*

To what these two Divines have said, I shall subjoin the *Holy Resolutions* of that late Excellent Prelate, Bishop *Beveridge*; which, as they stand on one hand a Proof of his sincere Piety to God, and willing Pains for the People under his Care; so are they, on the other hand, a standing, and severe Reproof
to

to those of the Ministerial Function, who have little, or no Regard to the Souls of the People committed to their Charge ; and *over whom*, they will upon some Occasions pretend, *the Holy Ghost has made them Overseers*. But as this Right Reverend Father expresses himself in the most pathetick Terms, I here deliver them in his own Words as follow.

‘ And here I cannot but declare (*says the Bishop* *) that ever since I knew what it was to study, I have found by Experience, that Spiritual and intellectual Pleasures do as far surpass those that are temporal and sensual, as the Soul does the Body. And, for this Reason, as I always thought the Study and Profession of Divinity to be the noblest and most agreeable of all Others, as carrying with it its own Encouragement and Reward ; so I have often wondered with myself, that the greatest Persons in the World should not be desirous, and ambitious of exercising their Parts in the Study of this necessary, as well as *sublime* Science ; and even devoting themselves to the Profession of it. For, do they aspire after Honour ? What greater Honour can there be, than to be the Mouth of GOD to the People, and of the People unto GOD ; to have the Most High himself, not only to speak *by* them, but *in* them too ? What greater Honour, than to have a Commission from

* Bp Beveridge's private Thoughts, Resolut. V. p. 145.

' the King of Kings, to represent Himself be-
 ' fore His People, and call upon them in His
 ' Name, to *turn from the Error of their Ways*;
 ' and walk in the Paths of GOD to everlast-
 ' ing Glory? What greater Honour than to
 ' be an Instrument, in His Hand, to bring
 ' poor Souls from the Gates of Hell, to set
 ' them among Princes in the Court of Hea-
 ' ven? Do they thirst after Pleasures? What
 ' greater Pleasure can they have, than to make
 ' it their Business to feed themselves and o-
 ' thers, with the Bread and Water of Life.

' But stay, my Soul, let not thy Thoughts
 ' run only upon the Dignity of thy Function,
 ' and the Spiritual Pleasures that attend the
 ' faithful Discharge of it; but think, like-
 ' wise upon the strict Account thou must give
 ' of it in another Life: The serious Confide-
 ' ration of which, as it cannot but be a great
 ' Comfort to the true and faithful Pastor,
 ' who has diligently fed his Flock with the
 ' *sincere Milk of GOD's Word*; so must it be
 ' a great Terror and Confusion to the sloth-
 ' ful and negligent, the false and deceitful
 ' Dispensers of the Divine Mysteries, who
 ' have either carelessly lost, or treacherously
 ' deluded, the Souls of those committed to
 ' their Charge, which they must, one Day,
 ' answer for, as well as for their own. And,
 ' therefore that nothing of this Kind may
 ' ever be laid to my Charge, I solemnly pro-
 ' mise and resolve, before GOD, so to de-
 ' mean myself in the Exercise of my Mini-
 ' sterial

‘ sterial Function, as to make the Care of
 ‘ Souls, especially of those committed to my
 ‘ Charge, the chief Study and Business of
 ‘ my Life.

‘ And that without Partiality or Excep-
 ‘ tion ; I must not single out some of the
 ‘ best of my Flock ; such as I have the high-
 ‘ est Respect for, or have received the great-
 ‘ est Obligations from ; but *minister to every*
 ‘ *one, according to their several Necessities*. If
 ‘ I meet with Men of *Knowledge and Vertue*,
 ‘ my Business must be to *confirm and establish*
 ‘ them therein ; if with those that are *igno-*
 ‘ *rant and immoral*, to *teach and instruct* them
 ‘ in the Ways of Religion, and by all Means
 ‘ possible, to *reclaim and reduce* them to the
 ‘ Exercise of their *Duty* ; always remem-
 ‘ bring, that as the Blessed JESUS, *the great*
 ‘ *Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls*, was not sent,
 ‘ *save to the lost Sheep of the House of Israel ;*
 ‘ *and came not to call the Righteous, but Sin-*
 ‘ *ners to Repentance* ; so it is the indispensable
 ‘ Duty of his Apostles and Ministers, (and
 ‘ by the Grace of GOD, I shall make it mine)
 ‘ to follow His Example in this Particular ;
 ‘ to spare no Time nor Pains in the Refor-
 ‘ mation of Sinners, though it be never so irk-
 ‘ some and difficult to accomplish ; even tho’
 ‘ I should meet with such as the Prophet *Da-*
 ‘ *vid* speaks of, *who hate to be reformed, and*
 ‘ *cast my Words behind them*. And, therefore,
 ‘ as I know it is my Duty, so I shall always
 ‘ endeavour to take Pleasure in the several Of-

‘ fices I perform of this Kind, *to strengthen the*
‘ *weak, heal the wounded, and bind up the bro-*
‘ *ken Heart* ; to call in those that err and go
‘ astray, and *to seek and save those that are*
‘ *lost.*

‘ To these Ends, tho’ Preaching is, with-
‘ out doubt, a most excellent and useful, as
‘ well as necessary Duty, (especially, if it be
‘ perform’d, as it ought, with Zeal and Reve-
‘ rence, and the Doctrine applied and press’d
‘ home, with Sincerity of Affection) yet, I
‘ shall not think it sufficient to instruct my
‘ People only from the Pulpit, but take all
‘ Opportunities to instil good Thoughts and
‘ Principles into their Minds in my private
‘ Conversation. I know, it is impossible for
‘ all Ministers frequently to visit every parti-
‘ cular Person or Family in their Parish, there
‘ being, in some Parishes, especially in and
‘ about *London*, so many thousands of Souls:
‘ But, howsoever, if it should please the Lord,
‘ to call me to such a Flock, though I can-
‘ not visit all, I shall visit as many as I can ;
‘ especially, those that are sick and infirm,
‘ and be sure to feed them *with the sincere*
‘ *Milk of the Word*, such as may turn to their
‘ spiritual Nourishment, and make them grow
‘ *in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord*
‘ *and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.* I will not fill
‘ their Heads with speculative Notions and
‘ Niceties in Divinity; (which, among the
‘ less judicious, are very often the Occasion
‘ of Heresy and Error, and sometimes also,
‘ of

‘ of Delusion and Distraction :) But my chief
 ‘ Care shall be to instruct them in those ne-
 ‘ cessary Truths, which their *Ckristian Faith*
 ‘ indispensably obliges them to know and be-
 ‘ lieve, and press them to the Performance
 ‘ of those Duties, without which they cannot
 ‘ be saved ; meekly and impartially reproving
 ‘ the particular Vices they are most inclined
 ‘ and addicted to, and chearfully encouraging
 ‘ and improving whatever virtuous Actions
 ‘ they are, any of them, exemplary in, and
 ‘ whatever good Habits and Inclinations the
 ‘ Divine Grace has put into their Hearts.

‘ And since Love and Charity is the great
 ‘ Characteristick of our Profession, the Bond
 ‘ and Cement of all other *Christian Duties* ;
 ‘ in order to make my Ministry the more suc-
 ‘ cessful, I resolve, in the last Place, not only
 ‘ to avoid all Differences and Disputes with
 ‘ them myself, but amicably to compose all
 ‘ such as may arise among the Neighbours.
 ‘ In a word, I shall make it my Endeavour,
 ‘ in all Things, so to approve myself as a
 ‘ faithful Minister, both in Life and Doc-
 ‘ trine, before them, that at the last Day,
 ‘ when the great GOD shall call for my Pa-
 ‘ rish, and myself to appear before him, I
 ‘ may be fitly prepared to give an Account of
 ‘ both ; at least, to answer for as many of
 ‘ them as He requires ; and may, with Joy
 ‘ and Comfort, pronounce this Sentence of
 ‘ my Saviour, if it may, without Offence, be
 ‘ applied to his Ministers, *Behold, I and the*
 ‘ *Chil-*

Children which thou hast given me.” Thus much for this pious Prelate, and I sincerely wish all his Clergy Brethren had taken the same holy Resolutions, and Practice ; better, far better had it been for both Priests, and People ; the former would not only have avoided all those sad Reflections, occasion’d by their Defection in Doctrines, and Corruption in their Lives ; but would have brought Glory to GOD, Honour and Increase to the Church, Comfort to their own Souls, and lasting Benefits to the Souls of their People ; whereas on the contrary, their Departure from the Reformed Doctrines, and their irregular Conduct, have occasion’d the Separation of many from the Church, who might have been both an Honour, and Ornaments to it.

Min. *I perceive Mr. Methodist, You have had much upon your Mind the Conduct of some of the Clergy; and throughout this whole Conversation You have not been wanting to declare it : And to support your Reflections, You have industriously furnish’d Yourself with some particular Authors (who have been something more cautious in their Conduct) to confirm in great Measure what You alledged concerning them ; all which I have heard with much Patience : But as these Ecclesiasticks You thus hint at, may think themselves above your Reproof, and must answer for themselves ; would it not better suit the Character of a Christian, to throw over them the Mantle of Love, and rather conceal their Defects, than expose them to publick View ;*
es-

especially, when all You say against them will rather exasperate, than reclaim them.

Meth. I assure You, Sir, I have not had the Conduct of many of the Clergy more on my Mind, than they themselves ought to have had upon their own Hearts; and in the Presence of Almighty God I declare it, that what I have said concerning them proceeds from pure Love, and Faithfulness to their Souls: And herein I have acted no other Part than that of a *faithful, christian Man*; who, if he had seen his Neighbour's House on Fire; or, a blind Man running into a Precipice; would have cry'd out, or endeavour'd to prevent the Danger; or, of a skilful and faithful Surgeon, who opens the Wound to search, and cleanse it, to prevent a Mortification. You cannot be ignorant, as You are of the sacred Function, how great the Care of, and Concern for Souls ought to be, to Those that take that Care upon them: It must affect the Heart of a good Man, to think how light *that Care* sits on the Minds of many Preachers; that They, who minister at God's Altars; Who know, or ought to know the *Terrors of the Lord*; and that *They must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, to receive ----- according to what they have done, whether good, or bad*; should yet be so regardless of their Duty to God, themselves, and their People; and unmindful of that *Great, and Awful Day of the Lord*.

The Answer of *Bernard Gilpin*, to *Tunstal*, Bishop of *Durham*, deserves our Notice: The
Pre-

Prelate, being his Uncle, offer'd him a *Dispensation* to be absent from his Living; to which the faithful Man reply'd, that *He fear'd when he came to stand before Christ's Tribunal, it would not serve his Turn to plead a Dispensation.*

The Consideration of these Things mov'd the pious Mr. *Whitesfield* thus to express himself in his *Journal* III. p. 75. *It is most notorious, that for the moralizing Iniquity of the Priests, the Land mourns. We have preached and lived many sincere Persons out of our Communion, I have now conversed with several of the best of all Denominations: Many of them solemnly protest, that they went from the Church, because they could not find Food for their Souls; they stayed among us, till they were starved out. I know, this Declaration will expose me to the Ill-will, not of all my Brethren, but of all my indolent, earthly-minded, pleasure-taking Brethren. But was I not to speak, the very Stones would cry out against them. Speak therefore I must, and will, and will not spare. God look to the Event. Whatever becomes of the Pastors who feed themselves, and not the Flock, I have born my Testimony, I have deliver'd my own Soul. I shall here insert a Copy of some Reasons given by several young Men to their Parish-Minister, for their Dissenting from the Church; as we find them in a Book, Intituled, *The Dissenting Laity pleading their own Cause*; Part of which will serve to corroborate what this young, and pious Divine has just before said.*

A Copy of some Reasons given to a Parish-Minister, about Fifty Years ago, by some Young Men, who were demanded to shew Cause for Leaving the Parish-Church, and produce some Reasons for their continued Non-conformity.

S I R,

“ **T**HO’ we believe the present Church of *England* to be a true Church in the main, with respect to the Doctrines and Essentials of the Christian Religion; yet we see Cause to dissent from Her upon other Accounts, as we told You at our last Meeting: And, according to your Demand, we here offer You some Reasons for our Dissenting and Nonconformity; which please to take as follows; ”

“ *Reason I.* Because, after the most diligent and impartial Search into Scripture (and other christian Means made use of) we can’t find the Constitution of that Church from which we dissent, and unto which You invite us to return, to be a pure Gospel Constitution; and we are fully persuaded in our Minds, that those Dissenting Churches, with which we now join, come nearer the Pattern in the Mount, and have more of a Gospel Constitution in ’em: And therefore to conform to

M

your

your Church, would bring us under Guilt every Way, both in deserting those Churches of which we are so well persuaded, and joining with such a Church wherein we are not at all satisfied; for the Scripture tells us, that *Whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin*. Rom. 14. 23."

" *Reason II.* Because we see a great Deficiency in the Government, Discipline, and Order of your Church, on many Accounts; the Particulars are too many to be insisted on at present, neither are You ignorant of 'em, Matter of Fact being so plain, that 'tis lamented by some serious Men of your own Party; as the Bishop of *Hereford*, in his *Naked Truth*; and Others. We read of Gospel-Order and Discipline in *Paul's* Epistles among Gospel-Churches, but we can't find it in your Church; and therefore we seek it elsewhere: For we ought to walk in Church-Fellowship, according to Gospel-Rule and Order. *Col.* 2, 5. *1 Cor.* 14. 40."

" *Reason III.* Because we are not allow'd the Liberty of choosing our own Pastors, but must receive such (and only such) as are put upon us by other Men, without our own Knowledge, Consent, or Approbation; which, we think, is a Kind of Lording it over God's Heritage, and highly unreasonable: For if People may choose their *Physician*, their *Counsellor*, or *Lawyer*, why not their *Pastor* and *Teacher*; which is of far greater Moment? It looks too much like a Branch of Popery, that we must still see with other Mens Eyes; and

and be so far impos'd on, as to be purely passive in such an Affair ; and take up with any Thing for a Minister, that the Interest, or Humour of a Diocesan, or Patron thinks fit to throw upon us, without asking any further Questions."

" *Reason* IV. Because of Non-edification by the preaching of such Ministers, as oft-times we must sit under in our Country Parish-Churches, from whose Discourses we can find little, or no Profit or Advantage ; it being so sorrily adapted to the spiritual Wants of poor Sinners, that it is more likely to starve than to feed 'em. We have too often met with Frustration on this Account, in the Parish-Churches ; we come hungry, and return empty ; we come for Bread, and are put off with Husks ; we come with drooping Souls, oppress'd with a Sense of Sin, perplex'd with Doubts and Fears, spiritual Straits and Burthens (which Country Curates seldom groan under) and they give us a Dish of dry Insipids to relieve us, as savoury as the White of an Egg ; with a Passage now and then out of *Cato* and *Plato* very little to the Purpose, and as little understood. Instead of the pure Gospel, we have a very fine Flourish of *Arminianism*, and People are set a working hard, but without Hands or Strength ; You may read as good Divinity in one of *Seneca's* Chapters : Sometimes the Sermon is fill'd up with Raillery and bitter Invectives against *Dissenters* ; and the Danger of a (suppos'd) *Schism* is more

infisted on, than the Danger of being Unconverted ; for that's a Point seldom touched on. And this hnngrny Feeding many poor Country Parishes must live on round the Year. And this one single Reason, duly consider'd, will abundantly justifie our Separation from your Church (upon the Account of Non-edification) and has more Weight and Strength in it than all Opponents can overthrow. ”

“ For 'tis most certain, that Chistians are under the greatest Obligations of getting spiritual Benefit and Advantage in their Souls, in Order to an Eternal World ; and consequently to apply themselves to the aptest Means for the Attaining such an End : This is so highly rational, that 'tis presum'd no Man of solid Sense will dispute it. ”

“ How unaccountable is it, that we must be ty'd up to our Parish-Church and Parish-Priest (right or wrong) when we can gain no real Benefit or Advantage ? For hereby the main End of Hearing is frustrated, to our spiritual Damage and Detriment. ”

“ We see Men are wiser in worldly Matters than You will allow us to be for better Things : A Man that's sick will not apply to an unskilful Doctor, because he lives in the Parish ; but to One that understands his Malady, and can prescribe proper Medicines : If one Cook dress but sorry Meat, Men will repair to another that provides better Accommodations : If one Fair or Market does not answer our End, we leave it, and frequent others : ”

others : And why may not People be as wise for Spirituals as for Temporals; for the Concerns of Eternity, as for the Things of Time and Sense ? ”

“ And tho’ God can work without Means, or by dull unlikely Means, or by contrary Means, yet that’s no Rule for us to go by ; for, more generally speaking, he makes use of proper Means and Instruments to effect his Designs : And ’tis observ’d, that Godly and Experienc’d Ministers are most frequently crown’d with Success, and made instrumental for the Good of Souls. And therefore that blind Notion that some People have imbib’d, of keeping close to their Parish-Church at any Rate, does favour so much of Ignorance, Bigotry, and Superstition, that ’tis fit only to be rejected with Contempt and Scorn. But however, let Others act herein as they please, we shall not be guilty of such a Piece of egregious Folly, to starve our Souls out of Compliment and mere Ceremony, to win the Good-will of the Parson of the Parish. ”

“ *Reason V.* Because of the Un-gospel Life and Practice of too many of our Raw Country *Levites* : And herein we might expatiate, but shall at present abridge ourselves. And indeed, the carnal Conversation of those spiritual Men has (we doubt not) made, and confirm’d a great Number of Dissenters of several Parties; and therefore You have the less Reason to exclaim against them for separating
ting

ting from your Church ; since You had so great a hand in driving them away by an un-exemplary Conversation. ”

“ Gospel Ministers are called the *Lights of the World* *, but when those Lights are Dark-ness, how great is that Darknefs ! They are call'd the *Salt of the Earth*, but when this Salt has lost its Savour, the Earth is corrupted, and not season'd hereby. Ministers are not only to preach in the Pulpit once a Week, but also to preach by their Practice all the Week, for oft-times Example is more winning than Precept ; but if those who are to be *Examples to the Flock* † give them a bad Example instead of a good one, 'tis commonly of pernicious consequence ; for, *when the blind lead the blind, both fall into the Ditch*. Mat. 15. 14. ”

“ We do acknowledge, that there are some serious godly Ministers that preach in the Parish Churches ; these we do heartily esteem and highly reverence, as the Ministers of Christ ; but, if we may believe our own Eyes, Ears, and common Observation, we have cause to fear, that too many who are stiled Gospel Ministers never felt the saving Power of Gospel Grace in their Hearts, but remain Strangers to it : For we are apt to believe, where true Grace is radicated in the Heart, it will have a kindly Influence on the whole Man, and regulate the Conversation somewhat a-

* Mat. 5. 13, 14. † 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. Isa. 9. 16.

greeable to the Gospel * ; *For a good Tree will produce some good Fruit.* Mat. 7. 17."

"What very Strangers are many of those Men we reflect on to any Heart-work, spiritual Experience, sensible Assurance, Communion with God, &c. nay, some of them have told us, That Discourses of this Nature was *Canting Fanaticism, Enthusiasm, whimsical Conceits*, and what not; so that we must not expect they should speak in the Apostles Dialect, *Truly our Fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* 1 Joh. 1. 3."

"They talk of divine Things at a Distance, without any spiritual Taste † or inward Sensation; but can't recommend those Things to us from any Experience they have had of the Power, and Sweetness of them upon their own Souls; that's *canting Fanaticism*. They give us something like a Map, or a dull Scheme of divine Things; much like a Geographer, who treats of Countries he never saw, nor tasted their delicious Fruits. But how poorly must those Flocks be led and fed, who have no better Guides and Feeders! And therefore, we seek out for some better Pastors and Pastures, to preserve our needy Souls both from starving and losing.

"Reason VI. Because every Man is under the highest Obligation to offer ‡ the best he hath to God, in Matters of divine Wor-

* Psal. 1. 3. † 1 Pet. 2. 3. Psal. 34. 8. ‡ Mal. 1. 7.
1 John 3, 20, 21.

ship, and to be faithful to his own Light, Judgment, or Conscience ; But we are not persuaded in our Minds and Consciences, that your Mode or Way of Worship is the Best, the most Pure, Spiritual, Evangelical, and freest from Mixtures and Corruption. And tho' You often tell us, that your Constitution and Mode is every Way the best, that does not at all satisfy, until You have prov'd it to be so, which is yet to do as much as ever ; we want some better Authority than your bare *Say-so*, before we insert it in our Creed : And therefore, we shall continue to worship God in the same Way and Manner we now do, because 'tis best, according to our Judgment and Conscience. "

" *Reason VII.* Because, as the Scriptures are the only Rule of Faith and Worship *, so we are to walk by that Rule as near as we can, without deviating either to the right Hand or the left. But we find many Things in your Mode or Manner of Worship, for which we can find no Scripture ; and yet You would impose them on us, as Necessary Terms of Communion ! You will not baptize our Children without the Aerial Sign of the Cross, *Fide-jussors*, or *Gossips*, and yet can't produce a Word of Scripture for one, or the other ; nor admit us to the *Lord's Table*, unless we kneel, as if we were paying Homage to Elements ; or did believe the Doctrine of

* Deut. 4, 2. Prov. 30. 6. Isa. 30. 21.

Transubstantiation, with which the Practice of Kneeling at the Sacrament bears equal Date, and is not a Day older; so *Peter Martyr* tells us, *Propter Transubstantionem & realem Presentiam invec̃ta est in Ecclesiam*. Church-History tells us *, in *Chrysostom's* Time, and before that in *Tertullian's* Time, the People stood at the Altar in Receiving; tho' it is most evident from the first Institution, that they took it in a Table-posture, after the *Jewish* Manner of sitting and eating; for 'tis said, that Christ sate down, and the twelve Apostles with him. *Luke 22. 14.* If they sate down, they did not kneel down; but sate in a Table-posture. Certainly, the Posture of Christ himself and his Disciples, at the first Institution of this Ordinance, is the best Copy to write after; and to use a different Posture out of choice, is a more tacit Reflection on the first Institutor; as if we could conceive a more humble, proper, and becoming Gesture than that Christ has left us from his own Example, and that of his chosen Disciples. *Socrates* tells us †, That the primitive Christians did partake of the Lord's Supper in a Table-posture, eating of it at their Love-Feasts; and *Paræus* asserts the same from Antiquity. And tho' we can lay no Stress on Postures and Gestures, yet we think, that since this novel Practice was brought in by the *Papists*, it should be thrown out by

* Hospin, de Orig. Temp. l. 2. c. 2. † Socrat. l. 5. Part 1. p. 298.

Protestants. We would fain know for whom that Ordinance was instituted, and whose Table it is; if it be the Lord's Table, why then are not the proper Persons admitted or excluded, only on his Terms, without Addition or Diminution? But we can get no Answer. Much less do we find, that ever Christ authorized You to administer those sacred Mysteries by way of Test, to a Man, who comes more out of Love to an Office, than out of Love to the Ordinance. 'Tis obvious from Scripture, that this Ordinance was design'd to commemorate the Passion of Christ*, to maintain Fellowship and Communion among real Saints, and confirm them in the Faith of the Gospel; and not to be made subservient to qualify Men for secular Employments: You can't in Conscience believe it had any such mean Design."

"Neither can we find any Scripture for Bowing before a dead Altar, or toward the *East*, at the Communion-Table (as You do) nor at the Syllables of the Name *Jesus*; or to read Prayers in a Surplice, as if 'twas most decent for a Man to wear his Shirt upon his Cloaths."

"Nor can we find any Countenance from Scripture for keeping of *Holydays* (falsly so call'd) but rather an Inhibition. *Gal.* 4. 10, 11. *Rom.* 14. 4, 5. And 'tis observ'd in *Papist* Countries, where *Festivals* and *Holydays*

* Luke 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17.

are much minded; that not Piety, but rather Profaneness, Debauchery and Poverty, are hereby promoted; which should deter us from Imitation."

"The Centurists of *Magdenburg* assure us*, That neither the Apostles, nor any Apostolick Men, did ever give Christians any Laws or Rule for observing any other Day or Days than the Lord's Day. And they tell us out of *Origen*, That it is unlawful for Christians to observe the Feasts or Solemnities either of *Jews* or *Gentiles*. We can find no consecrated Ground, Garments, Fonts, and Utenfils for Divine Service, in all *Paul's* Epistles; and we dare believe that the School of *Tyrannus*, where *Paul* preached for some Time, was never consecrated, any more than the Ground was by the River-side where *Lydia* was converted. *Acts* 19. 9. & 16. 15.

"We have look'd diligently thorow the New Testament, and turn'd from Chapter to Chapter, to find something said about *Lent*, *Rogation-Week*, *Ember-Week*, *Palm*, *Shrove*, and *Advent Sundays*, *Holy Times* and *Saints-Eves*, *Wednesdays* and *Fridays Fasts*, &c. but we can't find one Word of those Matters either express'd or imply'd, and therefore we are not fond of those Trinkets."

"Neither do we find Sacerdotal Attire touch'd on by the Apostle, as *Gowns*, *Tippets*, *Surplice*, *Four-corner'd Caps*, as we see them

† Magd. Cen. 2. c. 6. p. 119. Cent. 3. p. 137.

in *Cathedrals* ; where a Fry of jolly Sparks entertain us with a charming Noife of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, as if met together for Diversion, whose Religion lies all in an *Anthem*, or *Antiphone*, but somewhat alternately † ; for they chaunt it forth in the *Cathedral* one Part of the Day, and quaver it out at the *Play-house* the other ; which seems a little incongruous. But however, we have Reason for our Non-compliance in those Matters, because they are all non-scriptural. "

" *Reason VIII.* Because You would impose on us Liturgick Forms in Publick Worship, without any divine Warrant, Prescript, or Example ; which is not only to invade our Christian Liberty, and tie us up where Christ hath left us free, but also a prohibiting Men from using the Gifts God has given them for Edification, and consequently an opposing the Apostle's Exhortation. *1 Pet. 4. 10. As every Man hath received the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God.* And tho' extraordinary Gifts are ceased, yet common and ordinary Gifts are not ceased, and (among other Gifts) the Gift of Prayer : For 'twould look strange to imagine, that now, in the Gospel-day, Christ should so far withdraw the common Presence, and Gifts of his Spirit from his Churches, as that a Gospel Minister should not be able to put up a Prayer

† As at Westminster.

to God for the People suitable to the Occasion, without a Form made to his Hand : Pray how does this comport with a Multitude of Promises † made by Christ to his Churches and Ministers in Gospel-times ? Or, if there must be a stinted Form, how, by what Gift, did the Composer indite that Form ? If by a common Gift, then why may not a Man use his own Gift, as well as that of another ? Why must one Man be ty'd up to the Words of another Man in Prayer ? Or this Age of Christians have a Form made them by the last Age of Christians, any more than the present Age should confine, and bind up the succeeding one ? Since Christ has left us at Liberty in those Matters, why should we bind up each other ? ”

“ And tho' some *Protestant* Churches abroad, have their *Liturgies*, yet they are not impos'd on all, (which is the Thing You drive at) or, if they are, we may demand, *Quo jure ?* Those Churches are no more a Rule to us in the present case, than they are to You in other Matters ; for *Christ* is the Lord and Law-giver to his Churches, neither is our Fear, or Worship of him to be taught by the Preepts of Men. ‡ We desire to walk in Scripture Light as near as we can, in this, as in other Matters ; but we can't find the least Ground in Scripture for stinted Forms of Prayer. St. *Paul* tells us, *We know not*

† Jer. 31. 34. Hab. 2. 14. Jer. 23. 4. John 14. 16.
Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 6. ‡ Isa. 33. 22.
Mat. 15. 9. Isa. 29. 13.

what to pray for as we ought, Rom. 8. and we do verily believe, that he never made any Form of Prayer for any Minister, Church, or Churches; for if he had, 'tis presum'd, we should have had some Intimation about it, somewhere or other in his Epistles. Neither can we think that excellent Prayer, which Christ dictated to his Disciples, whilst in their Minority, was to be used by them as a Form; or that they were oblig'd to the same syllabical Words, and not Words of like Import. Christ tells them elsewhere, that their *Communication should be yea, yea; and nay, nay*; does it therefore follow, they must keep to those Syllables, and not use other Terms of like Import? So God bids his People to *take with them Words in Prayer, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously*. Hos. 14. 2. But can we infer from thence, that they must always say them very Words when they pray, or that they may not express themselves in other Words to the same purpose? If we compare the two Evangelists †, *Matthew* and *Luke*, we find them to differ in Words as to the *Lord's-Prayer*, in more Points than one; which intimates, that we are not obliged to Words and Syllables. Christ was not so much for teaching his Disciples Words, as Things; for 'twas a heavenly Directory in the great Work of Prayer, what we ought to seek at God's Hands, and what Frame of Heart is

† Mat. 6. Luke 11.

requir'd in every Prayer we make ; which should strike a greater Awe on the carnal Mob or Multitude, who chatter over that Prayer so many Times a Day, without any due Sense or Seriousness, as if they were the Disciples for whom 'twas dictated, not considering, that their Practice contradicts this Prayer, and their Lives give their Lips the Lie every Day. But this is not a Theme for a Parish Pulpit. And tho' some of our Teachers do not say the *Lord's Prayer* as a Form, at the End of their other Prayers (which is a great Fault, as You would make us believe in your Letter ;) but herein You talk more like a Child in a Frock, than like a Man in a Gown ; your Work is to prove, they are under a divine Obligation so to do ; and when that's done, we dare undertake for them. "

" But we deny You, or any Man else, to prove from Scripture, or the purest Antiquity, that ever the Apostles, or any Teachers among the primitive Christians, made Use of any Form of *Prayer*, one or other ; or, that they shut up their Prayers in the Assembly with the *Lord's Prayer* ; much less popp'd down in the Pulpit on a sudden, to say them Words (as many of You do) as if then You were worshipping some other God, with a differing Mode and Gesture. What's this but a superstitious Conceit of Words and Syllables, as if some Part of the Scripture were more sacred and effectual than other ; when 'tis all alike of Divine Authority ? "

" And

“ And further, it is to be noted, that tho’ the Old-Testament-Believers were heard, and accepted thro’ the same atoning Saviour, yet ’twas not usual with them to address themselves to God thro’ Christ explicitly, for want of a clearer Light into the Mystery of a *God incarnate*; concerning which, the Disciples at that Time were much in the dark, as we find in the Gospel, before Christ’s Crucifixion. Now, that Prayer which Christ had taught them seems more properly suited to their present Light and State, who were yet under the Remains of that shadowy Dispensation; but when the final Accomplishment drew near, and their Light and Knowledge greatly encreased, then we find Christ enjoins them to pray in his Name explicitly (for there is no mention of Christ’s Name in the *Lord’s Prayer*) John 16. 24. *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my Name; ask, that your Joy may be full.*

“ Our Blessed Saviour, You see, when going to leave the World, in giving his Disciples the last Advice about *Prayer* and *Invocation*; he does not point them back to the Form of Words given them some Time before (in their Nonage) as if those Words must be said by them as a Form as long as they liv’d; no such Thing can be deduc’d from Scripture, but rather the contrary. *Hitherto* (says Christ) *you have asked nothing in my Name*: For when he gave them that excellent Directory for Prayer, he did not then dic-

dictate to them, to address the Father in his Name explicitly, as You heard; their present Sight and Conception of Things at that Time, could not so well take it in; but now he bids them pray to the Father in his Name more expressly, and explicitly, than they had done heretofore; to plead *his Merits*, and *whole Undertaking*, as the most prevalent Argument with the Father, and most agreeable to a pure Gospel-state; but without any set Form of Words given, that ever we could meet with, or ever shall. "

" And tho' the Matter contain'd in the *Lord's Prayer* be a Rule and Directory as to the Matter of Prayer, and will be to the Church 'militant, even to the End of Time; and the Words and Phrases to be used in Prayer, as other Scripture Expressions; but not as a stinted Form of Words, which we are tied to use, and to say *verbatim*, that's remote from the genuine Sense of Scripture *. Neither can we suppose that the Disciples, after the Mission of the Holy Ghost, did at all use that Form of Words; for the first *Prayer* we find them to make together as a Church, with one Accord, is recorded *Acts* 4. from the 24th to the 30th Verse, but not any one Sentence of that Form of *Prayer* found in it; nor no mention made of that Form in the *Acts* of the Apostles, or in *Paul's* Epistles, or any where else: Doubtless, had it been set

* Rom. 8. 26. Gal. 4, 6.

up for a standing Form to all Christians, to be used by them without Variation to the World's End, we should have had some Notice of it, either by Precept or Example. The Apostle exhorts Christians to *Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*, and *watching thereunto with all Perseverance*; but not a Word of any stinted Form, one or other, is to be found in all his Writings, nor in the whole New Testament. And therefore, since we are under no sacred Tye or Obligation from Scripture, to use any set *Forms of Prayer* in God's Worship, much less are we obliged to accept of, and submit to, any humane Forms, that any Party of Men would impose."

"Tertullian tells us*, *That he, and the Christians in his Days, look'd up to Heaven, with their Hands stretched out in the Christian Assemblies, and made their Prayers fine Monitors, without a Directory, as coming from the free Motion of their Hearts.* Justin Martyr shews the manner of the Christians in the second Century, but no mention made of any *Liturgy*, or *Form*, one or other: For (saith he) *He that instructed the People, prayed according to his Ability.*

"Socrates tells us†, *That among all the Christians of that Age, scarce two were to be found that used the same Words in Prayer:* And yet we are apt to think, that the Chri-

* Ephes. 6. 18. † Tertul. Apol. c. 30. Ep. 121. Apol. 2, p. 7. ‡ Socrat. Hist. l. 5. cap. 21.

stians of those Days pray'd better without-book than You do with one. But if You want a fuller Account of those Matters, a *Lay-Brother* of ours will better inform your Judgment, in his Book, Intituled *De Laune's Plea for the Non-Conformists*.

“ *Reason IX.* Because we have for some Time past, seen Cause to relinquish that Mode and Manner of Worship practiced in that Church unto which You invite us to return; and unless we saw the Cause remov'd, 'tis of equal Force with us now as then, for Things continue the same; but we have shook off the Yoke of humane Inventions and ceremonial Impositions, and upon a Review, with the most mature and deliberate Thoughts, we see no Reason why we should put it on again, unless it be to please You; but that's not weighty enough. And therefore, since we are satisfied that we have done but our Duty herein, we resolve to persevere, and continue as we have begun, come on't what will; for the Apostle tells us, *If we build again the Things we have destroy'd, we should hereby make ourselves Transgressors.* Gal. 2. 18. Col. 2. 20.

“ *Reason X.* Because we are not fond of falling under the Character of *such as are given to change* *, especially in Points of Religion; unless that Change were for the best, and might contribute to our spiritual Advantage: But here we can have no such Prospect,

* Prov. 24. 21. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

much less Assurance of Betterment hereby. We account him not the wisest of Men, who will barter a better for a worse, or exchange Substance for Ceremony : Neither can we take him for the truest Friend, who would advise us to such a Bargain ; for we reckon that in Matters of Religion, spiritual Gain and spiritual Loss are Things that ought to fall under Consideration, and have an Influence on all thinking Men, both with respect to Choice and Practice : This certainly is most agreeable to Scripture and Right Reason. But,

“ We can propose no spiritual Profit, or Advantage, by coming back again to your Church, either in one Respect or other (but rather spiritual Loss and Detriment) if we may give any Credence to common Observation, or to our own inward Experience ; for You know the Phrase, *Experientia stultorum magistra.* ”

“ Now to act contrary to our own Experience, in leaving a more spiritual Way of Worship, wherein we have found Benefit, for a more flat and formal Way, wherein we could find none, would be an unaccountable Practice, not to be justified : But, we shall avoid Prolivity, *Verbum sapienti sat est.* ”

“ These, Sir, are a few Reasons among many, for our present Practice of *Non-Conformity* ; and by that Time You have given them a plenary Answer, perhaps we may cut You out more Work : But, unless You can
ad-

advance something new, of greater Weight and Strength, than has hitherto been advanc'd by any of our Opponents, it will be but beating the Air ; and 'tis presum'd, that Things must remain in *Statu quo*, the *Dissenters* are like to continue *Dissenters* still. "

These Reasons are a pregnant Proof of Mr. *Whitefield's* Charge, quoted by the Bishop of London in his *Pastoral Letter* ; and evidently shew the Weakness of the Bishop's Hopes, and the slender Charity he has for this Young, Pious Divine ; when he says *, *This is a heavy Charge ----- but I hope, it is very far from Truth.* But how far from, or near to Truth, I leave every impartial Reader to judge, when he considers Mr. *Whitefield's* solemn Appeal to Heaven, and the awful and direful Summons he gave to all his *indolent, earthly-minded, and pleasure-taking Brethren*, to meet him at the Bar of God, there to answer his Charge, and to confute, if they can, before the Judge of all the Earth, the Truth of his Doctrines. Sad Reflection this to all negligent Ministers ! And I will here take the Liberty to say, That I would not be in their Steads for Ten thousand Worlds, should they go out of the World without Repentance for their grievous Transgressions : But I leave them to stand, or fall, by that Judge, which will do Justice, and can't be brib'd. And what have You to reply to these Things ?

† Bp of London's Pastoral Letter, 4th Edit. p. 24.

Min. I have not Time to stay with You to make what Objections I could; but this one I will make: And that is against the 8th Reason, that these young Men give against Forms of Prayer; and more especially, because it is agreeable to the Practice your Beloved Whitefield is come into, of Praying and Preaching ex tempore, almost wherever he comes; when our Excellent Church has so order'd it, that her Sons shall read such Forms of Prayer every Day: And he not minding these Injunctions, it is a breaking in upon our Excellent Constitution, and so flying in the Face of all our Learned, and Judicious Bishops; this, I think, is a very great Indignity offer'd to them.

*Meth. But Sir, why are You so hot against, and angry with this Pious Young Man? It may be, I can produce as Judicious, Learned and Pious a Bishop as any in the Church of England, who not only practis'd Praying ex tempore, but wrote very strenuously for the Practice of this Excellent DUTY; and that was the Learned Dr. Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, a Person highly esteem'd for his Singular Piety. And that I may do Justice to the Memory of that Great, and Good Man, I shall here observe, that this excellent Prelate (after having treated of the Grace, and Gift of Prayer,) says *, *There are Two Extreams, which usually hinder Men from a Proficiency in this Gift.**

* Bp Wilkins's Gift of Prayer, p. 9, &c.

1. *When they so confine themselves to the Help of Books and particular Set-forms, as not to aim at, or attempt after any further Improvement of their own Knowledge and Abilities in this Kind.*

2. *When Men depend altogether upon sudden Suggestions, as if it were a quenching, or confinement of the Spirit, to be furnished beforehand with Matter, or Expressions for this Service.*

Unto those that err in the first Kind I would suggest these Considerations :

First by way of Concession : As for those weaker Christians, and new Converts, who have not their Hearts enlarged with an Ability to express their own Wants and Desires, 'tis both lawful and convenient for such to help themselves, not only in their Families, but even in their secret Performance of this Duty, by the Use of some good Book, or prescribed Form, until by further Endeavour, and Experience they may attain unto some measure of this Gift.

*Such Persons may, perhaps, find oftentimes their own Case and Condition more pitbily, and affectionately set down in a Prayer penn'd by another, than they are able to express it themselves. And if the Use of such a Form do prove a Means to warm their Affections, and inkindle their Graces ; certainly then, it cannot be stiled a quenching of the Spirit. 'Tis not essential unto the Nature of Prayer, that it be read, or rehearsed by Memory, or by immediate and sudden Suggestion, (these Things being
such*

such circumstantial Adjuncts, as have not any absolute intrinsecal Necessity or Unlawfulness) but rather that it be delivered with Understanding and suitable Affections, with Humility and Confidence, with an inward Sense of our Conditions. Nor is there any great Difference (as they are considered in themselves) betwixt repeating by Memory, and reading out of a Book ; the Memory being but a Kind of invisible Book for the Registry of our Thoughts : Though in this Case it should be specially remembred, that in the Use of such prescript Forms, to which a Man hath been accustomed, he ought to be narrowly watchful over his own Heart, for fear of that Lip-service and Formality, which in such Cases we are more especially exposed unto. This I thought good to premise for the Removal of Prejudice on the one Hand.

*But now in the second Place, for any One so to set down, and satisfy himself with his Book-prayer, or some prescript Form, as to go no farther, this were to remain in his Infancy, and not to grow up in his new Nature : This would be as if a Man, who had once need of Crutches, should always afterwards make use of them, and so necessitate himself to a continual Impotence. 'Tis the Duty of every Christian to grow, and encrease in all the Parts of Christianity, as well Gifts as Graces ; to exercise and improve every holy Gift, and not to stifle any of those Abilities wherewith God hath endowed them : Now how can a Man be said to
live*

live suitable unto these Rules, who does not put forth himself in some Attempts, and Endeavours of this Kind? And then besides, how can such a Man suit his Desires unto several Emergencies? What One says of Counsel to be had from Books, may be fitly applied to this Prayer by Book, That 'tis commonly of itself, something flat and dead, floating for the most part too much in Generalities, and not particular enough for each several Occasion. There is not that Life and Vigour in it, to engage the Affections, as when it proceeds immediately from the Soul itself, and is the natural Expression of those Particulars, whereof we are most sensible.

And if it be a Fault not to strive and labour after this Gift, much more is it to jeer, and despise it by the Name of *ex tempore* Prayer, and praying by the Spirit; which Expressions (as they are frequently used by some Men by way of Reproach) are for the most part a Sign of a profane Heart, and such as are altogether Strangers from the Power, and Comfort of this Duty.

Whereas 'tis commonly objected by some, That they cannot so well join in an unknown Form, with which they are not before-hand acquainted.

I answer, That's an inconsiderate Objection, and does oppose all Kind of Forms, that are not publicly prescribed. As a Man may in his Judgment assent unto any divine Truth delivered in a Sermon, which he never heard before, so he may join in his Affections unto any

holy Desire in a Prayer, which he never heard before. If he who is the Mouth of the rest, shall through Imprudence deliver that which we cannot approve of, God does not look upon it as our Prayer, if our Desires do not say Amen to it.

If it be again objected, That this Ability of praying without Book, may perhaps be fit for Ministers, and such as are of more eminent Learning and Knowledge; but it is not to be expected from others.

I answer, 'Tis true, such Persons are more especially concerned in this Gift, and 'tis the greater Skame and Fault for them to be without it; but yet others are not exempted from labouring after it, no more than they are from the Occasions, or Need of it, or performing the Duty. And as for the pretended Difficulty of it, I shall in this Discourse make it evident, that if it be but seriously attempted (as all religious Businessses ought to be) 'tis easy to be attained by any one that has but common Capacity.

*Thus much for this pious Prelate, and to this I may add; that tho' the Clergy are especially concern'd in this Gift of *ex tempore* Prayer, yet were many of them to lay aside Forms, and hold their Livings by their *spiritual* Gifts and Graces, there are many private Christians, who are so richly endow'd, as to bid much fairer for them; and their Expulsion, I fear, would be as great as was that of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers at the Restoration; who could by no*

Means

Means so subject their Consciences, as to comply with those *Forms*, which are with some the main Part of Religion; and of whom it may be truly said, *They have a Form of Godliness, but deny the Power thereof.*

And further, from what this Excellent Prelate has said, it is evident to a Demonstration, that Mr. *Whitefield* was not out of, but in his Duty, by *praying without a Form of Words*; and it was obvious to many judicious Persons, who heard him before he was denied the *Church-Pulpits*, that when he came out into the Fields, the *Spirit of Christ*, that dwelleth in him, gave him such Enlargements in that Duty, as fully convinc'd them that he was influenced by it, both in *Praying* and *Preaching*; and he thereby gained more Seals to his Ministry than ever he had before.

And to conclude, I may venture to say, That if a great Part of the *Clergy* had a true Zeal for the Honour and Glory of God, the Salvation of Souls, and the Establishment of sacred Truths; if they hungred, and thirsted after Divine Grace and Everlasting Happiness, instead of hunting after *Riches*, *Power*, and *Preferments*; then would the People behold the *Beauty of Holiness* in the *Lives* and *Doctrines* of their Preachers, and might, with the *Psalmist*, joyfully say, *How pleasant are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts? &c.*

F I N I S.

*BOOKS Written by the same Author,
and Sold by T. COOPER, at the Globe
in Pater-noster-Row.*

I THE Church of England turn'd Dissenter at Last :
Shewing, That the Generality of Her CLERGY
have forsaken the most Material Doctrines of That
Church. Price 1 s.

II, The Dreadful Degeneracy of a Great Part of the
CLERGY, the Means to promote Irreligion, Atheism,
and Popery. To which is prefix'd, A LETTER to the
Reverend Mr. GEORGE WHITEFIELD. Price 1 s.

III. The BABEL of QUAKERISM thrown down : Or,
The Errors and Inconsistencies of Robert Barclay's Apology
for the QUAKERS, discover'd, and confuted. In a Letter
to Dr. ROUTH, a Principal Teacher among that People,
meeting in Southwark, London. Price 1 s.

IV. Dr. TRAPP Try'd and Cast ; and allow'd to the
10th of May next to Recant ; Being some REMARKS
on his Late Book, Intitled, The Nature, Folly, Sin, and
Danger of being Righteous Overmuch. In which is inserted,
a Consolatory Letter to One of our holy Martyrs a little Time
before he suffer'd the Fiery Trial : and is very proper to be
perus'd by those pious Souls, who labour under Doubts and
Fears with respect to their Eternal Happiness. The Second
Edition, with a Postscript in Vindication of Mr. WHITE-
FIELD. Price 6 d.